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THE WORKS AND LIFE
OF
WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

VOL. V.

THIRD SERIES OF IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS
(*Continued*),
FOURTH SERIES OF IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS,
LETTERS OF PERICLES AND ASPASIA,
AND
MINOR PROSE PIECES.

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OF

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

FIFTH VOLUME

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(*Continued*),

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LETTERS OF PERICLES AND ASPASIA,

AND

MINOR PROSE PIECES.

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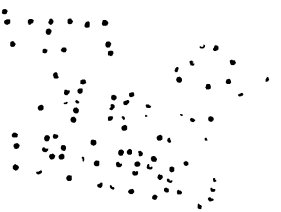

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IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

DIALOGUES OF LITERARY MEN.

(*Continued.*)

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DIALOGUES OF LITERARY MEN.

(*Continued.*)

XIX. ANDREW MARVEL AND BISHOP PARKER.*

Parker. Most happy am I to encounter you, Mr. Marvel. It is some time, I think, since we met. May I take the liberty of inquiring what brought you into such a lonely quarter as Bunhill-fields?

Marvel. My lord, I return at this instant from visiting an old friend of ours, hard-by, in Artillery-Walk, who, you will be happy to hear, bears his blindness and asthma with truly Christian courage.

Parker. And pray, who may that old friend be, Mr. Marvel?"

Marvel. Honest John Milton.

* He wrote a work entitled, as Hooker's was, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, in which are these words: "It is better to submit to the unreasonable impositions of Nero and Caligula than to hazard the dissolution of the state." It is plain enough to what *impositions* he recommended the duty of submission: for, in our fiscal sense of the word, none ever bore more lightly on the subject than Caligula's and Nero's: even the provinces were taxed very moderately and fairly by them. He adds, "Princes may with less danger give liberty to men's vices and debaucheries than to their consciences." Marvel answered him in his *Rehearsal Transposed*, in which he says of Milton, "I well remember that, being one day at his house, I there first met you, and accidentally. Then it was that you wandered up and down Moor-fields, astrologising upon the duration of His Majesty's Government. You frequented John Milton incessantly, and haunted his house day by day. What discourses you there used he is too generous to remember: but, he never having in the least provoked you, it is inhumanely and inhospitably done to insult thus over his old age. I hope it will be a warning to all others, as it is to me, to avoid, I will not say such a Judas, but a man that creeps into all companies, to jeer, trepan, and betray them."

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Parker. The same gentleman whose ingenious poem, on our first parents, you praised in some elegant verses prefixed to it?

Marvel. The same who likewise, on many occasions, merited and obtained your lordship's approbation.

Parker. I am happy to understand that no harsh measures were taken against him, on the return of our most gracious sovran. And it occurs to me that you, Mr. Marvel, were earnest in his behalf. Indeed I myself might have stirred upon it, had Mr. Milton solicited me in the hour of need.

Marvel. He is grateful to the friends who consulted at the same time his dignity and his safety: but gratitude can never be expected to grow on a soil hardened by solicitation. Those who are the most ambitious of power are often the least ambitious of glory. It requires but little sagacity to foresee that a name will become invested with eternal brightness by belonging to a benefactor of Milton. *I might have served him!* is not always the soliloquy of late compassion or of virtuous repentance: it is frequently the cry of blind and impotent and wounded pride, angry at itself for having neglected a good bargain, a rich reversion. Believe me, my lord bishop, there are few whom God has promoted to serve the truly great. They are never to be superseded, nor are their names to be obliterated in earth or heaven. Were I to trust my observation rather than my feelings, I should believe that friendship is only a state of transition to enmity. The wise, the excellent in honour and integrity, whom it was once our ambition to converse with, soon appear in our sight no higher than the ordinary class of our acquaintance; then become fit objects to set our own slender wits against, to contend with, to interrogate, to subject to the arbitration, not of their equals, but of ours; and lastly, what indeed is less injustice and less indignity, to neglect, abandon, and disown.

Parker. I never have doubted that Mr. Milton is a learned man; indeed he has proven it: and there are many who, like yourself, see considerable merit in his poems. I confess that I am an indifferent judge in these matters: and I can only hope that he has now corrected what is erroneous in his doctrines.

Marvel. Latterly he hath never changed a jot, in acting or thinking.

Parker. Wherein I hold him blameable, well aware as I am that never to change is thought an indication of rectitude and wisdom.

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But if everything in this world is progressive; if everything is defective: if our growth, if our faculties, are obvious and certain signs of it; then surely we should and must be different in different ages and conditions. Consciousness of error is, to a certain extent, a consciousness of understanding; and correction of error is the plainest proof of energy and mastery.

Marvel. No proof of the kind is necessary to my friend: and it was not always that your lordship looked down on him so magisterially in reprehension, or delivered a sentence from so commanding an elevation. I, who indeed am but a humble man, am apt to question my judgment where it differs from his. I am appalled by any supercilious glance at him, and disgusted by any austerity ill assorted with the generosity of his mind. When I consider what pure delight we have derived from it, what treasures of wisdom it has conveyed to us, I find him supremely worthy of my gratitude, love, and veneration; and the neglect in which I now discover him, leaves me only the more room for the free effusion of these sentiments. How shallow in comparison is everything else around us, trickling and dimpling in the pleasure-grounds of our literature! If we are to build our summer-houses against ruined temples, let us at least abstain from ruining them for the purpose.

Parker. Nay, nay, Mr. Marvel! so much warmth is uncalled for.

Marvel. Is there anything offensive to your lordship in my expressions?

Parker. I am not aware that there is. But let us generalize a little: for we are prone to be touchy and testy in favour of our intimates.

Marvel. I believe, my lord, this fault, or sin, or whatsoever it may be designated, is among the few that are wearing fast away.

Parker. Delighted am I, my dear sir, to join you in your innocent pleasantry. But, truly and seriously, I have known even the prudent grow warm and stickle about some close affinity.

Marvel. Indeed? so indecorous before your lordship?

Parker. We may remember when manners were less polite than they are now; and not only the seasons of life require an alteration of habits, but likewise the changes of society.

Marvel. Your lordship acts up to your tenets.

Parker. Perhaps you may blame me, and more severely than I would blame our worthy friend Mr. John Milton, upon finding a slight

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variation in my exterior manner, and somewhat more reserve than formerly: yet wiser and better men than I presume to call myself, have complied with the situation to which it hath pleased the Almighty to exalt them.

Marvel. I am slow to censure anyone for assuming an air and demeanour which, he is persuaded, are more becoming than what he has left off. And I subscribe to the justice of the observation, that wiser and better men than your lordship have adapted their language and their looks to elevated station. But sympathy is charity, or engenders it: and sympathy requires proximity, closeness, contact: and at every remove, and more especially at every gradation of ascent, it grows a little colder. When we begin to call a man our *worthy friend*, our friendship is already on the wane. In him who has been raised above his old companions, there seldom remains more warmth than what turns everything about it vapid: familiarity sidles towards affability, and kindness curtseys into condescension.

Parker. I see, we are hated for rising.

Marvel. Many do really hate others for rising: but some who appear to hate them for it, hate them only for the bad effects it produces on the character.

Parker. We are odious, I am afraid, sometimes for the gift, and sometimes for the giver: and Malevolence cools her throbs by running to the obscurity of neglected merit. We know whose merit that means.

Marvel. What! because the servants of a king have stamped no measure above a certain compass, and such only as the vulgar are accustomed to handle, must we disbelieve the existence of any greater in its capacity, or decline the use of it in things lawful and commendable? Little men like these have no business at all with the mensuration of higher minds: gaugers are not astronomers.

Parker. Really, Mr. Marvel, I do not understand metaphors.

Marvel. Leaving out arithmetic and mathematics, and the sciences appertaining to them, I never opened a page without one: no, not even a title-page with a dozen words in it. Perhaps I am unfortunate in my tropes and figures: perhaps they come, by my want of dexterity, too near your lordship. I would humbly ask, is there any criminality in the calculation and casting up of manifold benefits, or in the employment of those instruments by which alone they are to be calculated and cast up?

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Parker. Surely none whatever.

Marvel. It has happened to me and my schoolfellows, that catching small fish in the shallows and ditches of the Humber, we called a minnow a perch, and a dace a pike; because they pleased us in the catching, and because we really were ignorant of their quality. In like manner do some older ones act in regard to men. They who are caught and handled by them are treated with distinction, because they are so caught and handled, and because self-love and self-conceit dazzle and delude the senses; while those whom they neither can handle nor catch are without a distinctive name. We are informed by Aristoteles, in his *Treatise on Natural History*, that solid horns are dropt and that hollow ones are permanent. Now, although we may find solid men cast on the earth and hollow men exalted, yet never will I believe in the long duration of the hollow, or in the long abasement of the solid. Milton, although the generality may be ignorant of it, is quite as great a genius as Bacon, bating the chancellorship, which goes for little where a great man is estimated by a wise one.

Parker. Rather enthusiastic! ay, Mr. Marvel! the one name having been established for almost a century, the other but recently brought forward, and but partially acknowledged. By coming so much later into the world, he can not be quite so original in his notions as Lord Verulam.

Marvel. Solomon said that, even in his time, there was nothing new under the sun: he said it unwisely and untruly.

Parker. Solomon? untruly? unwisely?

Marvel. The spectacles, which by the start you gave, had so nearly fallen from the bridge of your nose, attest it. Had *he* any? It is said, and apparently with more reason than formerly, that there are no new thoughts. What do the fools mean who say it? They might just as well assert that there are no new men, because other men existed before, with eyes, mouth, nostrils, chin, and many other appurtenances. But as there are myriads of forms between the forms of Scarron and Hudson * on one side, and of Mercury and Apollo on the other, so there are myriads of thoughts, of the same genus, each taking its peculiar conformation. Æschylus and Racine, struck by the same idea, would express a sentiment very differently. Do not imagine that the idea is the thought: the idea is that which the

* A dwarf in that age.

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thought generates, rears up to maturity, and calls after its own name. Every note in music has been sounded frequently; yet a composition of Purcell may be brilliant by its novelty. There are extremely few roots in a language; yet the language may be varied, and novel too, age after age. Chess-boards and numerals are less capable of exhibiting new combinations than poetry; and prose likewise is equally capable of displaying new phases and phenomenons in images and reflections. Good prose, to say nothing of the original thoughts it conveys, may be infinitely varied in modulation. It is only an extension of metres, an amplification of harmonies, of which even the best and most varied poetry admits but few. Comprehending at once the prose and poetry of Milton, we could prove, before "fit audience," that he is incomparably the greatest master of harmony that ever lived.

There may be, even in these late days, more originality of thought, and flowing in more channels of harmony, more bursts and breaks and sinuosities, than we have yet discovered.

The admirers of Homer never dreamt that a man more pathetic, more sublime, more thoughtful, more imaginative, would follow.

Parker. Certainly not.

Marvel. Yet Shakespeare came, in the memory of our fathers.

Parker. Mr. William Shakespeare of Stratford upon Avon? A remarkably clever man: nobody denies it.

Marvel. At first people did not know very well what to make of him. He looked odd: he seemed witty; he drew tears. But a grin and a pinch of snuff can do that.

Every great author is a great reformer; and the reform is either in thought or language. Milton is zealous and effective in both.

Parker. Some men conceive that, if their name is engraven in Gothic letters, it signifies and manifests antiquity of family; and others, that a congestion of queer words and dry chopt sentences, which turn the mouth awry in reading, make them look like original thinkers. I have seen fantastical folks of this description who write *wend* instead of *go*, and are so ignorant of grammar as even to put *wended* for *went*. I do not say that Mr. Milton is one of them; but he may have led weak men into the fault.

Marvel. Not only is he not one of them, but his language is never a patchwork of old and new: all is of a piece. Beside, he is the only writer whom it is safe to follow in spelling: others are incon-

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sistent; some for want of learning, some for want of reasoning, some for want of memory, and some for want of care. But there are certain words which ceased to be spelt properly just before his time: the substantives, *childe* and *wilde*, and the verbs *finde* and *winde*, for instance.

Parker. Therein we agree. We ought never to have deviated from those who delivered to us our Litany, of which the purity is unapproachable and the harmony complete. Our tongue has been drooping ever since.

Marvel. Until Milton touched it again with fire from heaven.

Parker. Gentlemen seem now to have delegated the correction of the press to their valets, and the valets to have devolved it on the chambermaids. But I would not advise you to start a fresh reformation in this quarter; for the round-heads can't spell, and the royalists won't: and if you bring back an ancient form retaining all its beauty, they will come forward from both sides against you on a charge of coining. We will now return, if you please, to the poets we were speaking of. Both Mr. Shakespeare and Mr. Milton have considerable merit in their respective ways; but both surely are unequal. Is it not so, Mr. Marvel?

Marvel. Under the highest of their immeasurable Alps, all is not valley and verdure: in some places there are frothy cataracts, there are the fruitless beds of noisy torrents, and there are dull and hollow glaciers. He must be a bad writer, or however a very indifferent one, in whom there are no inequalities. The plants of such table-land are diminutive, and never worth gathering. What would you think of a man's eyes to which all things appear of the same magnitude and at the same elevation? You must think nearly so of a writer who makes as much of small things as of great. The vigorous mind has mountains to climb and valleys to repose in. Is there any sea without its shoals? On that which the poet navigates, he rises intrepidly as the waves rise round him, and sits composedly as they subside.

Parker. I can listen to this: but where the authority of Solomon is questioned and rejected, I must avoid the topic. Pardon me; I collect from what you threw out previously, that, with strange attachments and strange aversions, you cherish singular ideas about greatness.

Marvel. To pretermit all reference to myself; our evil humours, and our good ones too, are brought out whimsically. We are dis-

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pleased by him who would be similar to us, or who would be near, unless he consent to walk behind. To-day we are unfriendly to a man of genius, whom ten days hence we shall be zealous in extolling: not because we know anything more of his works or his character, but because we have dined in his company and he has desired to be introduced to us. A flat ceiling seems to compress those animosities which flame out furiously under the open sky.

Parker. Sad prejudices! sad infirmities!

Marvel. The sadder are opposite to them. Usually men, in distributing fame, do as old maids and old misers do: they give everything to those who want nothing. In literature, often a man's solitude, and oftener his magnitude, disinclines us from helping him if we find him down. We are fonder of warming our hands at a fire already in a blaze than of blowing one. I should be glad to see some person as liberal of fame in regard to Milton, as in regard to those literators of the town who speedily run it out.

Parker. I have always called him a man of parts. But, Mr. Marvel! we may bestow as injudiciously as we detract.

Marvel. Perhaps as injudiciously, certainly not as injuriously. If indeed we are to be called to account for the misapplication of our bestowals, a heavy charge will lie against me for an action I committed in my journey hither from Hull. I saw an old man working upon the road, who was working upon the same road, and not far from the same spot, when I was first elected to represent that city in parliament. He asked me for *something to make him drink:* which, considering the heat of the weather and the indication his nose exhibited of his propensities, did appear superfluous. However, I gave him a shilling, in addition to as many good wishes as he had given me.

Parker. Not reflecting that he would probably get intoxicated with it.

Marvel. I must confess I had all that reflection with its whole depth of shade upon my conscience; and I tried as well as I could to remove the evil. I inquired of him whether he was made the happier by the shilling. He answered that, if I was none the worse for it, he was none. "Then," said I, "honest friend! since two are already the happier, prythee try whether two more may not become so: therefore drink out of it at supper with thy two best friends."

Parker. I would rather have advised frugality and laying-by. Perhaps he might have had a wife and children.

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Marvel. He could not then, unless he were a most unlucky man, be puzzled in searching for his two best friends. My project gave him more pleasure than my money: and I was happy to think that he had many hours for his schemes and anticipations between him and sunset.

Parker. When I ride or walk, I never carry loose money about me, lest, through an inconsiderate benevolence, I be tempted in some such manner to misapply it. To be robbed would give me as little or less concern.

Marvel. A man's self is often his worst robber. He steals from his own bosom and heart what God has there deposited, and he hides it out of his way, as dogs and foxes do with bones. But the robberies we commit on the body of our superfluities, and store up in vacant places, in places of poverty and sorrow, these, whether in the dark or in the daylight, leave us neither in nakedness nor in fear, are marked by no burning-iron of conscience, are followed by no scourge of reproach; they never deflower prosperity, they never distemper sleep.

Parker. I am ready at all times to award justice to the generosity of your character, and no man ever doubted its consistency. Believing you to be at heart a loyal subject, I am thrown back on the painful reflection that all our acquaintance are not equally so. Mr. Milton, for example, was a republican, yet he entered into the service of a usurper: you disdained it.

Marvel. Events proved that my judgment of Cromwell's designs was correcter than his: but the warier man is not always the wiser, nor the more active and industrious in the service of his country.

Parker. His opinions on religion varied also considerably, until at last the vane almost wore out the socket, and it could turn no longer.

Marvel. Is it nothing in the eyes of an Anglican bishop to have carried the gospel of Christ against the Talmudists of Rome; the Word of God against the traditions of men; the liberty of conscience against the conspiracy of tyranny and fraud? If so, then the Protector, such was Milton, not of England only, but of Europe, was nothing.

Parker. You are warm, Mr. Marvel.

Marvel. Not by any addition to my cloth, however.

Parker. He hath seceded, I hear, from every form of public wor-

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ship: and doubts are entertained whether he believes any longer in the co-equality of the Son with the Father, or indeed in his atonement for our sins. Such being the case, he forfeits the name and privileges of a Christian.

Marvel. Not with Christians, if they know that he keeps the ordinances of Christ. Papists, Calvinists, Lutherans, and every other kind of scoria, exploding in the furnace of zeal, and cracking off from Christianity, stick alike to the side of this gloomy, contracted, and unwholesome doctrine. But the steadiest believer in the divinity of our Lord, and in his atonement for us; if pride, arrogance, persecution, malice, lust of station, lust of money, lust of power, inflame him; is incomparably less a Christian than he who doubteth all that ever was doubted of his genealogy and hereditary rights, yet who never swerveth from his commandments. A wise man will always be a Christian, because the perfection of wisdom is to know where lies tranquillity of mind, and how to attain it, which Christianity teaches; but men equally wise may differ and diverge on the sufficiency of testimony, and still farther on matters which no testimony can affirm, and no intellect comprehend. To strangle a man because he has a narrow swallow, shall never be inserted among the "infallible cures" in my *Book of Domestic Remedies.*

Parker. We were talking gravely: were it not rather more seemly to continue in the same strain, Mr. Marvel?

Marvel. I was afraid that my gravity might appear too specific: but, with your lordship's permission and exhortation, I will proceed in serious reflections, to which indeed, on this occasion, I am greatly more inclined. Never do I take the liberty to question or examine any man on his religion, or to look over his shoulder on his account-book with his God. But I know that Milton, and every other great poet, must be religious: for there is nothing so godlike as a love of order, with a power of bringing great things into it. This power, unlimited in the one, limited (but incalculably and inconceivably great) in the other, belongs to the Deity and the Poet.

Parker. I shudder.

Marvel. Wherefore? at seeing a man, what he was designed to be by his Maker, his Maker's image? But pardon me, my lord! the surprise of such a novelty is enough to shock you.

Reserving to myself for a future time the liberty of defending my friend on theology, in which alone he shifted his camp, I may remark

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what has frequently happened to me. I have walked much: finding one side of the road miry, I have looked toward the other and thought it cleaner: I have then gone over, and when there I have found it just as bad, although it did not seem nearly so, until it was tried. This however has not induced me to wish that the overseer would bar it up; but only to wish that both sides were mended effectually with smaller and more binding materials, not with large loose stones, nor with softer stuff, soon converted into mud.

Parker. Stability then and consistency are the qualities most desirable, and these I look for in Mr. Milton. However fond he was of Athenian terms and practices, he rejected them after he had proved them.

Marvel. It was not in his choice to reject or establish. He saw the nation first cast down and lacerated by Fanaticism, and then utterly exhausted by that quieter blood-sucker, Hypocrisy. A powerful arm was wanted to drive away such intolerable pests, and it could not but be a friendly one. Cromwell and the saner part of the nation were unanimous in beating down Presbyterianism, which had assumed the authority of the Papacy without its lenity.

Parker. He, and those saner people, had subverted already the better form of Christianity which they found in the Anglican church. Your Samson had shaken its pillars by his attack on Prelaty.

Marvel. He saw the prelates, in that reign, standing as ready there as anywhere to wave the censer before the king, and under its smoke to hide the people from him. He warned them as an angel would have done, nay, as our Saviour has done, that the wealthy and the proud, the flatterer at the palace and the flatterer at the altar, in short the man for the world, is not the man for heaven.

Parker. We must lay gentle constructions and liberal interpretations on the Scriptures.

Marvel. Then let us never open them. If they are true we should receive them as they are; if they are false we should reject them totally. We can not pick and choose; we can not say to the Omniscient, "We think you right here; we think you wrong there; however, we will meet you half-way and talk it over with you." This is such impiety as shocks us even in saying we must avoid it: yet our actions tend to its countenance and support. We clothe the ministers of Christ in the same embroidery as was worn by the proudest of his persecutors, and they mount into Pilate's chair. The

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Reformation has effected little more than melting down the gold lace of the old wardrobe, to make it enter the pocket more conveniently.

Parker. Who would have imagined Mr. John Milton should ever have become a seceder and sectarian! he who, after the days of adolescence, looked with an eye of fondness on the idle superstitions of our forefathers, and celebrated them in his poetry.

Marvel. When superstitions are only idle it is wiser to look on them kindly than unkindly. I have remarked that those which serve best for poetry have more plumage than talon, and those which serve best for policy have more talon than plumage. Milton never countenanced priestcraft, never countenanced fraud and fallacy.

Parker. The business is no easy one to separate devotion from practices connected with it. There is much that may seem useless, retained through ages in an intermixture with what is better: and the better would never have been so good as it is if you had cast away the rest. What is chaff when the grain is threshed, was useful to the grain before its threshing.

Marvel. Since we are come unaware on religion, I would entreat of your lordship to enlighten me, and thereby some others of weak minds and tender consciences, in regard to the criminality of pretence to holiness.

Parker. The Lord abominates, as you know, Mr. Marvel, from the Holy Scriptures, all hypocrisy.

Marvel. If we make ourselves or others, who are not holy, seem holy, are we worthy to enter his kingdom?

Parker. No; most unworthy.

Marvel. What if we set up, not only for good men, but for exquisitely religious, such as violate the laws and religion of the country?

Parker. Pray, Mr. Marvel, no longer waste your time and mine in such idle disquisitions. We have beheld such men lately, and abominate them.

Marvel. Happily for the salvation of our souls, as I conceive, we never went so far as to induce, much less to authorise, much less to command, anyone to fall down and worship them.

Parker. Such insolence and impudence would have brought about the blessed Restoration much earlier.

Marvel. We are now come to the point. It seems wonderful to pious and considerate men, unhesitating believers in God's holy word, that although the Reformation, under his guidance, was brought about

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by the prayers and fasting of the bishops, and others well deserving the name of saints, chiefly of the equestrian order, no place in the Kalendar hath ever been assigned to them.

Parker. Perhaps, as there were several, a choice might have seemed particular and invidious. Perhaps also the names of many as excellent having been removed from the Rubric, it was deemed unadvisable to inaugurate them.

Marvel. Yet, my lord bishop, we have inserted Charles the Martyr. Now there have been saints not martyrs, but no martyr not a saint.

Parker. Do you talk in this manner? you who had the manliness to praise his courage and constancy to Cromwell's face.

Marvel. Cromwell was not a man to undervalue the courage and constancy of an enemy: and, had he been, I should have applauded one in his presence. But how happens it that the bishops, priests, and deacons, throughout England, treat Charles as a saint and martyr, and hold his death-day sacred, who violated those ecclesiastical ordinances, the violation whereof you would not only reprobate in another, but visit with exemplary punishment? Charles was present at plays in his palace on the sabbath. Was he a saint in his life-time? or only after his death? If in his life-time, the single miracle performed by him was, to act against his established church without a diminution of holiness. If only in his death, he holds his canonization by a different tenure from any of his blessed predecessors.

It is curious and sorrowful that Charles the Martyr should have suffered death on the scaffold, for renewing the custom of arbitrary loans and forced benevolences, which the usurper Richard III. abolished. Charles, to be sure, had the misfortune to add the practice of torture and mutilation, to which those among the English who are most exposed to it bear a great dislike. Being a martyr, he is placed above the saints in dignity: they tortured only themselves.

Parker. Let me bring to your recollection, that plays were not prohibited on the sabbath by our great Reformers.

Marvel. But if it is unchristianlike now, it was then; and a saint must have been aware of it, although it escaped a reformer.

Parker. You scoff, Mr. Marvel! I never answer the scoffer.

Marvel. I will now be serious. Is the canonization of Charles the effect of a firm conviction that he was holier than all those ejected from the Kalendar? or is it merely an ebullition of party-spirit, an

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ostentatious display of triumphant spite against his enemies? In this case, and there are too many and too cogent reasons for believing it, would it not be wiser never to have exhibited to the scrutinizing church of Rome a *consecration* more reprehensible than the former *desecrations?* Either you must acknowledge that saints are not always to be followed in their practices, or you must allow men, women, and children, to dance and frequent the play-houses on Sundays, as our martyr did before he took to mutilating and maiming; and he never left off the custom by his own free will.

Parker. I think, Mr. Marvel, you might safely leave these considerations to us.

Marvel. Very safely, my lord! for you are perfectly sure never to meddle with them: you are sure to leave them as they are; solely from the pious motive that there may be peace in our days, according to the Litany. On such a principle there have been many, and still perhaps there may be some remaining, who would not brush the dust from the bench, lest they should raise the moths and discover the unsoundness and corrosions. But there is danger lest the people at some future day should be wiser, braver, more inquisitive, more pertinacious; there is danger lest, on finding a notorious cheat and perjurer set up by Act of Parliament among the choice and sterling old saints, they undervalue not only saints but Parliaments.

Parker. I would rather take my ground where politics are unmingled with religion, and I see better reason to question the wisdom of Mr. Milton than the wisdom of our most gracious King's Privy Council. We enjoy, thank God! liberty of conscience. I must make good my objection on the quarter of consistency, lest you think me resolute to find fault where there is none. Your friend continued to serve the Protector when he had reconstructed a house of Lords, which formerly he called an abomination.

Marvel. He never served Cromwell but when Cromwell served his country; and he would not abandon her defence for the worst wounds he had received in it. He was offended at the renewal of that house, after all the labour and pains he had taken in its demolition: and he would have given his life, if one man's life could have paid for it, to throw down again so unshapely and darkening an obstruction. From his youth upward he had felt the Norman rust entering into our very vitals; and he now saw that, if we had received from the bravest of nations a longer sword, we wore a heavier chain

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to support it. He began his *History* from a love of the Saxon institutions, than which the most enlightened nations had contrived none better; nor can we anywhere discover a worthier object for the meditations of a philosophical or for the energies of a poetical mind.

Parker. And yet you republicans are discontented even with this.

Marvel. We are not mere Saxons. A wise English republican will prefer (as having grown up with him) the Saxon institutions generally and mainly, both in spirit and practice, to those of Rome and Athens. But the Saxon institutions, however excellent, are insufficient. The moss must be rasped off the bark, and the bark itself must be slit, to let the plant expand. Nothing is wholesomer than milk from the udder: but would you always dine upon it? The seasons of growth, physical and intellectual, require different modes of preparation, different instruments of tillage, different degrees of warmth and excitement. Whatever is bad in our constitution we derive from the Normans, or from the glosses put against the text under their Welsh and Scotch successors: the good is thrown back to us out of what was ours before. Our boasted Magna Charta is only one side of the old Saxon coat; and it is the side that has the broken loopholes in it. It hangs loose, and at every breeze 'tis a hard matter to keep it on. In fact the Magna Charta neither is, nor ever was long together, of much value to the body of the people. Our princes could always do what they wished to do, until lately; and this palladium was so light a matter, that it was easily taken from the town-hall to the palace. It has been holden back or missing whenever the people most loudly called for it. Municipalities, in other words small republics, are a nation's main-stay against aristocratical and regal encroachments.

Parker. If I speak in defence of the peerage, you may think me interested.

Marvel. Bring forward what may fairly recommend the institution, and I shall think you less interested than ingenious.

Parker. Yet surely you, who are well connected, cannot be insensible of the advantages it offers to persons of family.

Marvel. Is that any proof of its benefit to the public? And persons of family! who are they? Between the titled man of ancient and the titled man of recent, the difference, if any, is in favour of the last. Suppose them both raised for merit (here indeed we do come to theory!), the benefits that society has received from

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him are nearer us. It is probable that many in the poor and abject are of very ancient families, and particularly in our county, where the contests of the York and Lancaster broke down, in many places, the high and powerful. Some of us may look back six or seven centuries, and find a stout ruffian at the beginning: but the great ancestor of the pauper, who must be somewhere, may stand perhaps far beyond.

Parker. If we ascend to the tower of Babel and come to the confusion of tongues, we come also to a confusion of ideas. A man of family, in all countries, is he whose ancestor attracted, by some merit, real or imputed, the notice of those more eminent, who promoted him in wealth and station. Now, to say nothing of the humble, the greater part even of the gentry had no such progenitors.

Marvel. I look to a person of very old family as I do to anything else that is very old, and I thank him for bringing to me a page of romance which probably he himself never knew or heard about. Usually, with all his pride and pretensions, he is much less conscious of the services his ancestor performed, than my spaniel is of his own when he carries my glove or cane to me. I would pat them both on the head for it; and the civiler and more reasonable of the two would think himself well rewarded.

Parker. The additional name may light your memory to the national service.

Marvel. We extract this benefit from an ancient peer; this phosphorus from a rotten post.

Parker. I do not complain or wonder that an irreligious man should be adverse not only to prelaty, but equally to a peerage.

Marvel. Herodotus tells us that among the Egyptians a herald was a herald because he was a herald's son, and not for the clearness of his voice. He had told us before that the Egyptians were worshippers of cats and crocodiles; but he was too religious a man to sneer at that. It was an absurdity that the herald should hold his office for no better reason than because his father held it. Herodotus might peradventure have smiled within his sleeve at no other being given for the privileges of the peer; unless he thought a loud voice, which many do, more important than information and discretion.

Parker. You will find your opinions discountenanced by both our universities.

Marvel. I do not want anybody to corroborate my opinions. They

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keep themselves up by their own weight and consistency. Cambridge on one side and Oxford on the other could lend me no effectual support; and my skiff shall never be impeded by the sedges of Cam, nor grate on the gravel of Isis.

Parker. Mr. Marvel, the path of what we fondly call patriotism is highly perilous. Courts at least are safe.

Marvel. I would rather stand on the ridge of Etna than lower my head in the Grotto del Cane. By the one I may share the fate of a philosopher, by the other I must suffer the death of a cur.

Parker. We are all of us dust and ashes.

Marvel. True, my lord! but in some we recognise the dust of gold and the ashes of the phœnix; in others the dust of the gateway and the ashes of turf and stubble. With the greatest rulers upon earth, head and crown drop together, and are overlooked. It is true, we read of them in history; but we also read in history of crocodiles and hyænas. With great writers, whether in poetry or prose, what falls away is scarcely more or other than a vesture. The features of the man are imprinted on his works; and more lamps burn over them, and more religiously, than are lighted in temples or churches. Milton, and men like him, bring their own incense, kindle it with their own fire, and leave it unconsumed and unconsumable: and their music, by day and by night, swells along a vault commensurate with the vault of heaven.

Parker. Mr. Marvel, I am admiring the extremely fine lace of your cravat.

Marvel. It cost me less than lawn would have done: and it wins me a reflection. Very few can think that man a great man, whom they have been accustomed to meet, dressed exactly like themselves; more especially if they happen to find him, not in park, forest, or chase, but warming his limbs by the reflected heat of the bricks in Artillery-walk. In England a man becomes a great man by living in the middle of a great field; in Italy by living in a walled city; in France by living in a courtyard: no matter what lives they lead there.

Parker. I am afraid, Mr. Marvel, there is some slight bitterness in your observation.

Marvel. Bitterness it may be from the bruised laurel of Milton.

What falsehoods will not men put on, if they can only pad them with a little piety! And how few will expose their whole faces,

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from a fear of being frost-bitten by poverty! But Milton was among the few.

Parker. Already have we had our Deluge: we are now once more upon dry land again, and we behold the same creation as rejoiced us formerly. Our late gloomy and turbulent times are passed for ever.

Marvel. Perhaps they are, if anything is for ever: but the sparing Deluge may peradventure be commuted for unsparing Fire, as we are threatened. The arrogant, the privileged, the stiff upholders of established wrong, the deaf opponents of equitable reformation, the lazy consumers of ill-requited industry, the fraudent who, unable to stop the course of the sun, pervert the direction of the gnomon, all these peradventure may be gradually consumed by the process of silent contempt, or suddenly scattered by the tempest of popular indignation. As we see in masquerades the real judge and the real soldier stopped and mocked by the fictitious, so do we see in the carnival of to-day the real man of dignity hustled, shoved aside, and derided, by those who are invested with the semblance by the milliners of the court. The populace is taught to respect this livery alone, and is proud of being permitted to look through the grating at such ephemeral frippery. And yet false gems and false metals have never been valued above real ones. Until our people alter these notions; until they estimate the wise and virtuous above the silly and profligate, the man of genius above the man of title; until they hold the knave and cheat of St. James's as low as the knave and cheat of St. Giles's; they are fitter for the slave-market than for any other station.

Parker. You would have no distinctions, I fear.

Marvel. On the contrary, I would have greater than exist at present. You can not blot or burn out an ancient name: you can not annihilate past services: you can not subtract one single hour from eternity, nor wither one leaf on his brow who hath entered into it. Sweep away from before me the soft grubs of yesterday's formation, generated by the sickliness of the plant they feed upon: sweep them away unsparingly; then will you clearly see distinctions, and easily count the men who have attained them worthily.

Parker. In a want of respect to established power and principles, originated most of the calamities we have latterly undergone.

Marvel. Say rather, in the averseness of that power and the inadequacy of those principles to resist the encroachment of injustice:

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say rather, on their tendency to distort the poor creatures swaddled up in them: add moreover the reluctance of the old women who rock and dandle them, to change their habiliments for fresh and wholesome ones. A man will break the windows of his own house that he may not perish by foul air within; now, whether is he, or those who bolted the door on him, to blame for it? If he is called mad or inconsiderate, it is only by those who are ignorant of the cause and insensible of the urgency. I declare I am rejoiced at seeing a gentleman, whose ancestors have signally served their country, treated with deference and respect: because it evinces a sense of justice and of gratitude in the people, and because it may incite a few others, whose ambition would take another course, to desire the same. Different is my sentence, when he who has not performed the action claims more honour than he who performed it, and thinks himself the worthier if twenty are between them than if there be one or none. Still less accordant is it with my principles, and less reducible to my comprehension, that they who devised the ruin of cities and societies should be exhibited as deserving much higher distinction than they who have corrected the hearts and enlarged the intellects, and have performed it not only without the hope of reward, but almost with the certainty of persecution.

Parker. Ever too hard upon great men, Mr. Marvel!

Marvel. Little men in lofty places, who throw long shadows because our sun is setting: the men so little and the places so lofty, that, casting my pebble, I only show where they stand. They would be less contented with themselves if they had obtained their preferment honestly. Luck and dexterity always give more pleasure than intellect and knowledge; because they fill up what they fall on to the brim at once, and people run to them with acclamations at the splash. Wisdom is reserved and noiseless, contented with hard earnings, and daily letting go some early acquisition, to make room for better specimens. But great is the exultation of a worthless man, when he receives, for the chips and raspings of his Bridewell logwood, a richer reward than the best and wisest, for extensive tracts of well-cleared truths; when he who has sold his country . . .

Parker. Forbear, forbear, good Mr. Marvel!

Marvel. When such is higher in estimation than he who would have saved it; when his emptiness is heard above the voice that hath shaken Fanaticism in her central shrine, that hath bowed down

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tyrants to the scaffold, that hath raised up nations from the dust, that alone hath been found worthy to celebrate, as angels do, creating and redeeming Love, and to precede with its solitary sound the trumpet that will call us to our doom.

Parker. I am unwilling to feign ignorance of the gentleman you designate: but really now you would make a very Homer of him.

Marvel. It appears to me that Homer is to Milton what a harp is to an organ; though a harp under the hand of Apollo.

Parker. I have always done him justice: I have always called him a learned man.

Marvel. Call him henceforward the most glorious one that ever existed upon earth. If two, Bacon and Shakespeare, have equalled him in diversity and intensity of power, did either of these spring away with such resolution from the sublimest highths of genius, to liberate and illuminate with patient labour the manacled human race? And what is his recompense?. The same recompense as all men like him have received, and will receive for ages. Persecution follows Righteousness: the Scorpion is next in succession to Libra. The fool however who ventures to detract from Milton's genius, in the night which now appears to close on him, will, when the dawn has opened on his dull ferocity, be ready to bite off a limb, if he might thereby limp away from the trap he has prowled into. Among the gentler, the better, and the wiser, few have entered yet the awful structure of his mind: few comprehend, few are willing to contemplate, its vastness. Politics now occupy scarcely a closet in it. We seldom are inclined to converse on them: and, when we do, it is jocosely rather than austerely. For even the bitterest berries grow less acrid when they have been hanging long on the tree. Beside, it is time to sit with our hats between our legs, since so many grave men have lately seen their errors, and so many brave ones have already given proofs enough of their bravery, and trip aside to lay down their laurels on gilt tables and velvet cushions. If my friend condemns anyone now, it is Cromwell; and principally for reconstructing a hereditary house of peers. He perceives that it was done for the purpose of giving the aristocracy an interest in the perpetuation of power in his family, of which he discovered the folly just before his death. He derides the stupidity of those who bandy about the battered phrase of *useful checks and necessary counterpoises.* He would not desire a hinderance on his steward in the receipt of his

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rent, if he had any, nor on his attorney in prosecuting his suit: he would not recommend any interest in opposition to that of the people: he would not allow an honest man to be arrested and imprisoned for debt, while a dishonest one is privileged to be exempt from it: and he calls that nation unwise, and those laws iniquitous, which tolerate so flagrant an abuse. He would not allow a tradesman, who lives by his reputation for honesty, to be calumniated as dishonest, without the means of vindicating his character, unless by an oppressive and dilatory procedure, while a peer, who perhaps may live by dishonesty, as some are reported to have done in former reigns, recurs to an immediate and uncostly remedy against a similar accusation. He would not see Mother Church lie with a lawyer on the woolsack, nor the ministry of the apostles devolve on the crown, sacred and uncontaminated as we see it is.

Parker. No scoffs at the crown, I do beseech you, Mr. Marvel! whatever enmity you and Mr. Milton may bear against the peers. He would have none of them, it seems.

Marvel. He would have as many as can prove by any precedent or argument, that virtue and abilities are hereditary; and I believe he would stint them exactly to that number. In regard to their services, he made these observations a few days ago: "Why, in God's name, friend Andrew, do we imagine that a thing can be made stabile by pulling at it perpetually in different directions? Where there are contrary and conflicting interests, one will predominate at one time, another at another. Now, what interest at any time ought to predominate against the public? We hear indeed that when the royal power is oppressive to them, the peers push their horns against the Leopards; but did they so in the time of James or his son? And are not the people strong enough to help and right themselves, if they were but wise enough? And if they were wise enough, would they whistle for the wolves to act in concert with the shepherd-dogs? Our consciences tell us," added he, "that we should have done some good, had our intentions been well seconded and supported. Collegians and barristers and courtiers may despise the poverty of our intellects, throw a few of their old scraps into our satchels, and send the beadle to show us the road we ought to take: nevertheless we are wilful, and refuse to surrender our old customary parochial footpath."

Parker. And could not he let alone the poor innocent collegians?

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Marvel. Nobody ever thought them more innocent than he, unless when their square caps were fanning the flames round heretics: and every man is liable to be a heretic in his turn. Collegians have always been foremost in the cure of the *lues* of heresy by sweating and caustic.

Parker. Sir! they have always been foremost in maintaining the unity of the faith.

Marvel. So zealously, that whatever was the king's faith was theirs. And thus it will always be, until their privileges and immunities are in jeopardy; then shall you see them the most desperate incendiaries.

Parker. After so many species of religion, generated in the sty of old corruptions, we return to what experience teaches us is best. If the Independents, or any other sect, had reason on their side, and truly evangelical doctrine, they would not die away and come to nothing as they have done.

Marvel. Men do not stick very passionately and tenaciously to a pure religion: there must be honey on the outside of it, and warmth within, and latitude around, or they make little bellow and bustle about it. That Milton has been latterly no frequenter of public worship, may be lamented, but is not unaccountable. He has lived long enough to perceive that all sects are animated by a spirit of hostility and exclusion, a spirit the very opposite to the Gospel. There is so much malignity, hot-blooded and cold-blooded, in zealots, that I do not wonder at seeing the honest man, who is tired of dissension and controversy, wrap himself up in his own quiet conscience, and indulge in a tranquillity somewhat like sleep, apart. Nearly all are of opinion that devotion is purer and more ardent in solitude, but declare to you that they believe it to be their duty to set an example by going to church. Is not this pride and vanity? What must they conceive of their own value and importance, to imagine that others will necessarily look up to them as guides and models! A hint of such an infirmity arouses all their choler; and from that moment we are unworthy of being saved by them. But if they abandon us to what must appear to them so hopeless a condition, can we doubt whether they would not abandon a babe floating like Moses in a basket on a wide and rapid river? I have always found these people, whatever may be the sect, self-sufficient, hard-hearted, intolerant, and unjust; in short, the opposite of Milton. What wonder then

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if he abstain from their society? particularly in places of worship, where it must affect a rational and religious man the most painfully. He thinks that churches, as now constituted, are to religion what pest-houses are to health: that they often infect those who ailed nothing, and withhold them from freedom and exercise. Austerity hath oftener been objected to him than indifference. That neither of the objections is well-founded, I think I can demonstrate by an anecdote. Visiting him last month, I found him hearing read by his daughter the treatise of Varro *On Agriculture*: and I said, laughingly, "We will walk over your farm together." He smiled, although he could not see that I did; and he answered, "I never wish to possess a farm, because I can enjoy the smell of the hay and of the hawthorn in a walk to Hampstead, and can drink fresh milk there." After a pause he added, "I can not tell (for nobody is more ignorant in these matters) in what our agriculture differs from the ancient: but I am delighted to be reminded of a custom which my girl has been recalling to my memory; the custom of crowning with a garland of sweet herbs, once a year, the brink of wells. Andrew! the old moss-grown stones were not neglected, from under which the father and son, the wife and daughter, drew the same pure element with the same thankfulness as their hale progenitors." His piety is infused into all the moods of his mind. Here it was calm and gentle, at other times it was ardent and enthusiastic. The right application of homely qualities is of daily and general use. We all want glass for the window, few want it for the telescope.

Parker. It is very amiable to undertake the defence of a person who, whatever may be his other talents, certainly has possessed but in a moderate degree the talent of making or of retaining friends.

Marvel. He, by the constitution of the human mind, or rather by its configuration under those spiritual guides who claim the tutelage of it, must necessarily have more enemies than even another of the same principles. The great abhor the greater, who can humble but can not raise them. The king's servants hate God's as much (one would fancy) as if he fed them better, drest them finelier, and gave them more plumy titles. Poor Milton has all these against him; what is wanting in weight is made up by multitude and multiformity. Judges and privy counsellors throw axes and halters in his path: divines grow hard and earthy about him: slim, straddling, blotchy writers, those of quality in particular, feel themselves cramped and

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stunted under him: and people of small worth, in every way, detract from his, stamping on it as if they were going to spring over it. Whatever they pick up against him they take pains to circulate; and are sorrier at last that the defamation is untrue than that they helped to propagate it. I wish Truth were as prolific as Falsehood, and as many were ready to educate her offspring. But although we see the progeny of Falsehood shoot up into amazing stature, and grow day by day more florid, yet they soon have reached their maturity, soon lose both teeth and tresses. As the glory of England is in part identified with Milton's, his enemies are little less than parricides. If they had any sight beyond to-day, what would they give, how would they implore and supplicate, to be forgotten?

Parker. Very conscientious men may surely have reprehended him, according to the lights that God has lent them.

Marvel. They might have burnt God's oil in better investigations. Your conscientious men are oftener conscientious in withholding than in bestowing.

Parker. Writers of all ranks and conditions, from the lowest to the highest, have disputed with Mr. Milton on all the topics he has undertaken.

Marvel. And I am grieved to think that he has noticed some of them. Salmasius alone was not unworthy *sublimi flagello*. But what would your lordship argue from the imprudence and irreverence of the dwarfs? The most prominent rocks and headlands are most exposed to the violence of the sea; but those which can repell the waves are in little danger from the corrosion of the limpets.

Parker. Mr. Milton may reasonably be censured for writing on subjects whereof his knowledge is imperfect or null: on courts, for instance. The greater part of those who allow such a license to their pens, and he among the rest, never were admitted into them. I am sorry to remark that our English are the formost beagles in this cry.

Marvel. If Milton was never admitted within them, he never was importunate for admittance: and if none were suffered to enter but such as are better and wiser than he, the gates of Paradise are themselves less glorious, and with less difficulty thrown open. The great, as we usually call the fortunate, are only what Solomon says about them, "the highest part of the dust of the world," and this highest part is the lightest. Do you imagine that all the ministers and kings under the canopy of heaven are, in the sight of a pure Intelligence,

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equivalent to him whom this pure Intelligence hath enabled to penetrate with an unfailing voice the dense array of distant generations? Can princes give more than God can? or are their gifts better? That they are usually thought so, is no conclusive proof of the fact. On the contrary, with me at least, what is usually thought on any subject of importance, and on many of none, lies under the suspicion of being wrong: for surely the number of those who think correctly is smaller than of those who think incorrectly, even where passions and interests interfere the least. Of those who appear to love God, and who sincerely think they do, the greater part must be conscious that they are not very fond of the men whom he hath shown himself the most indulgent to, and the most enriched with abilities and virtues. Among the plants of the field we look out for the salubrious, and we cultivate and cull them; to the wholesomer of our fellow-creatures we exhibit no such partiality: we think we do enough when we only pass them without treading on them: if we leave them to blossom and run to seed, it is forbearance.

Parker. Mr. Milton hath received his reward from his employers.

Marvel. His services are hardly yet begun; and no mortal man, no series of transitory generations, can repay them. God will not delegate this; no, not even to his angels. I venture no longer to stand up for him on English ground: but, since we both are Englishmen by birth, I may stand up for the remainder of our countrymen. Your lordship is pleased to remark that they are the first *beagles* in the cry against courts. Now I speak with all the freedom and all the field-knowledge of a Yorkshireman, when I declare that your lordship is a bad sportsman, in giving a *hound's* title to dogs that hunt vermin.

Parker. Mr. Marvel! a person of your education should abstain from mentioning thus contemptuously men of the same rank and condition as yourself.

Marvel. All are of the same rank and condition with me, who have climbed as high, who have stood as firmly, and who have never yet descended. Neglect of time, subserviency to fortune, compliance with power and passions, would thrust men far below me, although they had been exalted higher, to the uncalculating eye, than mortal ever was exalted. Sardanapalus had more subjects and more admirers than Cromwell, whom nevertheless I venture to denominate the most sagacious and prudent, the most tolerant and humane, the most firm and effective prince, in the annals of our country.

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Parker. Usurpers should not be thus commended.

Marvel. Usurpers are the natural and imprescriptable successors of imbecile, unprincipled, and lawless kings. In general they too are little better furnished with virtues, and even their wisdom seems to wear out under the ermine. Ambition makes them hazardous and rash: these qualities raise the acclamations of the vulgar, to whom meteors are always greater than stars, and the same qualities which raised them, precipitate them into perdition. Sometimes obstreperous mirth, sometimes gipsy-like mysteriousness, sometimes the austerity of old republicanism, and sometimes the stilts of modern monarchy, come into play, until the crowd hisses the actor off the stage, pelted, broken-headed, and stumbling over his sword. Cromwell used none of these grimaces. He wore a mask while it suited him; but its features were grave; and he threw it off in the heat of action.

Parker. On the whole, you speak more favourably of a man who was only your equal, than of those whom legitimate power has raised above you.

Marvel. Never can I do so much good as he did. He was hypocritical, and, in countermining perfidy, he was perfidious; but his wisdom, his valour, and his vigilance saved the nation at Worcester and Dunbar. He took unlawful and violent possession of supreme authority; but he exercised it with moderation and discretion. Even Fanaticism had with him an English cast of countenance. He never indulged her appetite in blood, nor carried her to hear the music of tortures reverberated by the arch of a dungeon. He supplied her with no optical glass at the spectacle of mutilations: he never thought, as Archbishop Laud did, he could improve God's image by amputating ears and slitting noses; he never drove men into holy madness with incessant howlings, like the lycanthropic saints of the north.

Having then before me not only his arduous achievements, but likewise his abstinence from those evil practices in which all our sovrans his predecessors had indulged, I should be the most insolent and the most absurd of mortals if I supposed that the Protector of England was only my equal. But I am not obliged by the force of truth and duty, to admit even to this position those whom court servility may proclaim to the populace as my superiors. A gardener may write *sweet lupin* on the cover of rape-seed; but the cover will never turn rape-seed into sweet lupin. Something more

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than a couple of beasts, couchant or rampant, blue or blazing, or than a brace of birds with a claw on a red curtain, is requisite to raise an earl or a marquis up to me, although lion-king-at-arms and garter-king-at-arms equip them with all their harness, and beget them a grandfather each. I flap down with the border of my glove, and brush away and blow off these gossamer pretentions; and I take for my motto, what the king bears for his, I hope as a model for all his subjects, "Dieu et mon droit."

Parker. Mr. Marvel! Mr. Marvel! I did not think you so proud a man.

Marvel. No, my lord? not when you know that Milton is my friend? If you wish to reduce me and others to our level, pronounce that name, and we find it. The French motto, merely from its being French, recalls my attention to what I was about to notice, when your lordship so obligingly led me to cover. I will now undertake to prove that the English beagles are neither the first nor the best in scenting what lieth about courts. A French writer, an ecclesiastic, a dignitary, a bishop, wrote lately:

"Courts are full of ill offices: it is there that all the passions are in an uproar:* it is there that hatred and friendship change incessantly for interest, and nothing is constant but the desire of injuring. Friend, as Jeremiah says, is fraudulent to friend, brother to brother. The art of ensnaring has nothing dishonourable in it excepting ill success. In short, Virtue herself, often false, becomes more to be dreaded than Vice."

Now, if there were any like place upon earth, would not even the worst prince, the worst people, insist on its destruction? What brothel, what gaming-house, what den of thieves, what wreck, what conflagration, ought to be surrounded so strictly by the protectors of property, the guardians of morals, and the ministers of justice? Should any such conspirator, any aider or abettor, any familiar or confidant of such conspiracy, be suffered to live at large? Milton, in the mildness of his humanity, would at once let loose the delinquents, and would only nail up for ever the foul receptacle.

Parker. The description is exaggerated.

Marvel. It is not a schoolboy's theme, beginning with, "Nothing is more sure," or "Nothing is more deplorable;" it is not an under-

* The original is defective in logic. "C'est là que toutes les passions se réunissent pour s'entre-chocquer et *se détruire*." So much the better, were it true.

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graduate's exercise, drawn from pure fresh thoughts, where there are only glimpses through the wood before him, or taken up in reliance on higher men to whom past ages have bowed in veneration: no; the view is taken on the spot by one experienced and scientific in it; by the dispassionate, the disinterested, the clear-sighted, and clear-souled Massillon.

Parker. To show his eloquence, no doubt.

Marvel. No eloquence is perfect, none worth showing, none becoming a Christian teacher, but that in which the postulates are just, and the deductions not carried beyond nor cast beside them, nor strained hard, nor snatched hastily. I quote not from stern republicans: I quote not from loose lay people: but from the interior of the court, from the closet of the palace, from under the canopy and cope of Episcopacy herself. In the same spirit the amiable and modest Fenelon speaks thus: "Alas! to what calamities are kings exposed! The wisest of them are often taken by surprise: men of artifice, swayed by self-interest, surround them: the good retire from them, because they are neither supplicants nor flatterers, and because they wait to be inquired for: and princes know not where they are to be found. O! how unhappy is a king, to be exposed to the designs of the wicked!"

It is impossible to draw any other deduction from this hypothesis, than the necessity of abolishing the kingly office, not only for the good of the people, but likewise of the functionaries. Why should the wisest and the best among them be subject to so heavy a calamity? a calamity so easily avoided. Why should there be tolerated a focus and point of attraction for wicked men? Why should we permit the good to be excluded, whether by force or shame, from any place which ought to be a post of honour? Why do we suffer a block to stand in their way, which by its nature hath neither eyes to discern them, nor those about it who would permit the use of the discovery if it had?

Parker. Horrible questions! leading God knows whither!

Marvel. The questions are originally not mine. No person who reasons on what he reads can ever have read the works of Fenelon and not have asked them. If what he says is true, they follow necessarily: and the answer is ready for every one of them. That they are true we may well surmise: for surely nobody was less likely to express his sentiments with prejudice or precipitacy, or passion. He

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and Massillon are such witnesses against courts and royalty as can not be rejected. They bring forward their weighty and conclusive evidence, not only without heat, but without intention, and disclose what they overheard as they communed with their conscience. There may be malice in the thoughts, and acrimony in the expressions, of those learned men who, as you remark, were never admitted into courts; although malice and acrimony are quite as little to be expected in them as in the spectators at a grand amphitheatre, because they could only be retired and look on, and were precluded from the arena in the combat of man and beast.

Parker. There may be malice where there is no acrimony: there may be here.

Marvel. The existence of either is impossible in well-regulated minds.

Parker. I beg your pardon, Mr. Marvel.

Marvel. What! my lord! do you admit that even in well-regulated minds the worst passions may be excited by royalty? It must then be bad indeed; worse than Milton, worse than Massillon, worse than Fenelon, represent it. The frugal republican may detest it for its vicious luxury and inordinate expenditure; the strict religionist, as one of the worst curses an offended God inflicted on a disobedient and rebellious people; the man of calmer and more indulgent piety may grieve at seeing it, with all its devils, possess the swine, pitying the poor creatures into which it is permitted to enter, not through their fault, but their infirmity; not by their will, but their position.

Parker. And do you imagine it is by their will that what is inrooted is taken away from them?

Marvel. Certainly not. Another proof of their infirmity. Did you ever lose a rotten tooth, my lord, without holding up your hand against it? or was there ever one drawn at which you did not rejoice when it was done? All the authorities we have brought forward may teach us, that the wearer of a crown is usually the worse for it: that it collects the most vicious of every kind about it, as a nocturnal blaze in uncultivated lands collects poisonous reptiles: and that it renders bad those who, without it, might never have become so. But no authority, before your lordship, ever went so far as to throw within its noxious agency the little that remained uncorrupted: none ever told us, for our caution, that it can do what nothing else can; namely, that it can excite the worst passions in well-regulated minds.

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O Royalty! if this be true, I, with my lord bishop, will detest and abhor thee as the most sweeping leveller! Go, go, thou indivisible in the infernal triad with Sin and Death!

Parker. I must not hear this.

Marvel. I spoke hypothetically, and stood within your own premises, referring to no actual state of things, and least of all inclined to touch upon the very glorious one in which we live. Royalty is in her place and sits gracefully by the side of our second Charles.

Parker. Here, Mr. Marvel, we have no divergence of opinion.

Marvel. Enjoying this advantage, I am the more anxious that my friend should partake in it, whose last political conversation with me was greatly more moderate than the language of the eloquent French bishops. "We ought," said he, "to remove anything by which a single fellow-creature may be deteriorated: how much rather then that which deteriorates many millions, and brands with the stamp of servitude the brow of the human race!"

Parker. Do you call this more moderate?

Marvel. I call it so, because it is more argumentative. It is in the temper and style of Milton to avoid the complaining tone of the one prelate, and the declamatory of the other. His hand falls on his subject without the softener of cuff or ruffle.

Parker. So much the worse. But better as it is than with an axe in it; for God knows where it might fall.

Marvel. He went on saying that the most clear-sighted kings can see but a little way before them and around them, there being so many mediums, and that delegated authority is liable to gross abuses.

Parker. Republics too must delegate a portion of their authority to agents at a distance.

Marvel. Every agent in a well-regulated republic is a portion of itself. Citizen must resemble citizen in all political essentials; but what is privileged bears little resemblance to what is unprivileged, In fact, the words *privilege* and *prerogative* are *manifestos* of injustice, without one word added.

Parker. Yet the people would not have your republic when they had tried it?

Marvel. Nor would the people have God when they had tried him. But is this an argument why we should not obey His ordinances, and serve Him with all our strength?

Parker. O strange comparison! I am quite shocked, Mr. Marvel!

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Marvel. What! at seeing any work of the Deity at all resemble the maker, at all remind us of him? May I be often so shocked! that light thoughts and troublesome wishes and unworthy resentments may be shaken off me; and that the Giver of all good may appear to me and converse with me in the garden he has planted.

Parker. Then walk humbly with him, Mr. Marvel.

Marvel. Every day I bend nearer to the dust that is to receive me: and, if this were not sufficient to warn me, the sight of my old friend would. I repress my own aspirations that I may continue to repeat his words, tending to prove the vast difference between the administration of a kingly government and a commonwealth, where all offices in contact with the people are municipal, where the officers are chosen on the spot by such as know them personally, and by such as have an immediate and paramount interest in giving them the preference. This, he insisted, is the greatest of all advantages; and this alone (but truly it is *not* alone) would give the republican an incontestable superiority over every other system.

Parker. Supposing it in theory to have its merits, the laws no longer permit us to recommend it in practice.

Marvel. I am not attempting to make or to reclaim a convert. The foot that has slipped back is less ready for progress than the foot that never had advanced.

Parker. Sir! I know my duty to God and my king.

Marvel. I also have attempted to learn mine, however unsuccessfully.

Parker. There is danger, sir, in holding such discourses. The cause is no longer to be defended without a violation of the statutes.

Marvel. I am a republican, and will die one; but rather, if the choice is left me, in my own bed; yet on turf or over the ladder unreluctantly, if God draws thitherward the cause and conscience, and strikes upon my heart to waken me. I have been, I will not say tolerant and indulgent (words applicable to children only), but friendly and cordial toward many good men whose reason stood in opposition and almost (if reason can be hostile) in hostility to mine. When we desire to regulate our watches, we keep them attentively before us, and touch them carefully, gently, delicately, with the finest and best-tempered instrument, day after day. When we would manage the minds of men, finding them at all different from our own, we thrust them away from us with blind impetuosity, and throw

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them down in the dirt to make them follow us the quicklier. In the turbulence of attack from all directions, our cause hath been decried by some, not for being bad in itself, but for being supported by bad men. What! are there no pretenders to charity, to friendship, to devotion? Should we sit uneasy and shuffling under it, and push our shoulders against every post to rub it off, merely for the Scotch having worn it in common with us, and for their having shortened, unstitched, and sold it?

Parker. Their history is over-run more rankly than any other, excepting the French, with blood and treachery.*

Marvel. Half of them are† Menteiths. Even their quietest and most philosophical spirits are alert and clamorous in defence of any villany committed by power or compensated by wealth. In the degeneracy of Greece, in her utter subjugation, was there one historian or one poet vile enough to represent as blameless the conduct of Clytemnestra? Yet what labours of the press are bestowed on a queen of Scotland, who committed the same crime without the same instigation, who had been educated in the principles of Christianity, who had conversed from her girlhood with the polite and learned, and who had spent only a very few years among the barbarians of the north!

Parker. Her subjects were angry, not that she was punished, but that she was unpaid for. They would have sold her cheaper than they sold her grandson: and, being so reasonable, they were outrageous that there were no bidders. Mr. Marvel! the Scotch have always been cringing when hungry, always cruel when full: their avarice is without satiety, their corruption is without shame, and their ferocity is without remorse.

Marvel. Among such men there may be demagogues, there can not be republicans; there may be lovers of free quarters, there can not be of freedom. Reverencing the bold and the sincere, and in them the character of our country, we Englishmen did not punish those ministers who came forth uncited, and who avowed in the House of Commons that

* Undoubtedly such were the sentiments of Milton and Marvel; and they were just. But Scotland in our days has produced not only the calmest and most profound reasoners, she has also given birth to the most enlightened and energetic patriots.

† Menteith was the betrayer of Wallace, the bravest hero, the hero in most points, our island has gloried in since Alfred.

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they had been the advisers of the Crown in all the misdemeanours against which we brought the heaviest charges. We bethought us of the ingratitude, of the injuries, of the indignities, we had sustained: we bethought us of our wealth transferred from the nation to raise up enemies against it: we bethought us of patient piety and of tranquil courage, in chains, in dungeons, tortured, maimed, mangled, for the assertion of truth and of freedom, of religion and of law.

Parker. Our most gracious king is disposed to allow a considerable latitude, repressing at the same time that obstinate spirit which prevails across the Border. Much of the Scottish character may be attributed to the national religion, in which the damnatory has the upper hand of the absolving.

Marvel. Our judges are merciful to those who profess the king's reputed and the duke's acknowledged tenets: but let a man stand up for the Independents, and out pops Mr. Attorney General, throws him on his back, claps a tongue-scraper into his mouth, and exercises it resolutely and unsparingly.

Parker. I know nothing of your new-fangled sects: but the doctrines of the Anglican and the Romish church approximate.

Marvel. The shepherd of the seven hills teaches his sheep in what tone to bleat before him, just as the Tyrolean teaches his bull-finch; first by depriving him of sight, and then by making him repeat a certain series of notes at stated intervals. Prudent and quiet people will choose their churches as they choose their ale-houses; partly for the wholesomeness of the draught and partly for the moderation of the charges: but the host in both places must be civil, and must not damn you, body and soul, by way of invitation. The wheat-sheaf is a very good sign for the one, and a very bad one for the other. Tythes are more ticklish things than tenets, when men's brains are sound: and there are more and worse stumbling-blocks at the barn-door than at the church-porch. I never saw a priest, Romanist or Anglican, who would tuck up his surplice to remove them. Whichever does it first, will have the most voices for him: but he must be an Englishman, and serve only Englishmen: he must resign the cook's perquisites to the Spaniard: he must give up not only the fat but the blood, and he must keep fewer faggots in the kitchen. Since, whatever the country, whatever the state of civilization, the Church of Rome remains the same; since under her influence the polite Louis at the present day commits as much bloodshed and perfidy, and

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commands as many conflagrations and rapes to her honour and advancement, as the most barbareus kings and prelates in times past; I do hope that no insolence, no rapacity, no profligacy, no infidelity, in our own lords spiritual, will render us either the passive captives of her insinuating encroachments, or the indifferent spectators of her triumphal entrance. We shall be told it was the religion of Alfred, the religion of the Plantagenets. There may be victory, there may be glory, there may be good men, under all forms and fabrics of belief. Titus, Trajan, the two Antonines, the two Gordians, Probus, Tacitus, rendered their countrymen much happier than the Plantagenets, or the greater and better Alfred could do. Let us receive as brethren our countrymen of every creed, and reject as Christians those only who refuse to receive them.

Parker. Most willingly; if such is the pleasure of the King and Privy Council. And I am delighted to find you, who are so steadfast a republican, extolling the emperors.

Marvel. Your idea of *emperor* is incorrect or inadequate. Cincinnatus and Cato were emperors in the Roman sense of the word. The Germans and Turks and Marocchines cut out theirs upon another model. These Romans, and many more in the same station, did nothing without the consent, the approbation, the *command* (for such was the expression), of the senate and the people. They lived among the wiser and better citizens, with whom they conversed as equals, and where it was proper (for instance on subjects of literature), as inferiors. From these they took their wives, and with the sons and daughters of these they educated their children. In the decline of the Commonwealth, kings themselves, on the boundaries of the empire, were daily and hourly conversant with honest and learned men. All princes in our days are so educated, as to detest the unmalleable and unmelting honesty which will receive no impression from them: nor do they even let you work for them unless they can bend you double. We must strip off our own clothes, or they never will let us be measured for their livery, which has now become our only protection.

Parker. It behoves us to obey; otherwise we can expect no forbearance and no tranquillity.

Marvel. I wish the tranquillity of our country may last beyond our time, although we should live, which we can not expect to do, twenty years.

Parker. God grant we may!

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Marvel. Life clings with the pertinacity of an impassioned mistress to many a man who is willing to abandon it, while he who too much loves it, loses it.

Parker. Twenty years!

Marvel. I have enjoyed but little of it at a time when it becomes a necessary of life, and I fear I shall leave as little for a heritage.

Parker. But in regard to living . . we are both of us hale men: we may hope for many days yet: we may yet see many changes.

Marvel. I have lived to see one too many.

Parker. Whoever goes into political life must be contented with the same fare as others of the same rank who embark in the same expedition.

Marvel. Before his cruise is over, he learns to be satisfied with a very small quantity of fresh provisions. His nutriment is from what is stale, and his courage from what is heady; he looks burly and bold, but a fatal disease is lying at the bottom of an excited and inflated heart. We think to thrive by surrendering our capacities: but we can no more live, my lord bishop, with breathing the breath of other men, than we can by not breathing our own. Compliancy will serve us poorly and ineffectually. Men, like columns, are only strong while they are upright.

Parker. You were speaking of other times; and you always speak best among the Greeks and Romans. Continue; pray!

Marvel. Sovranty, in the heathen world, had sympathies with humanity; and Power never thought herself contaminated by touching the hand of Wisdom. It was before Andromache came on the stage painted and patched and powdered, with a hogshead-hoop about her haunches and a pack-saddle on her pole, surmounted with upright hair larded and dredged: it was before Orestes was created monsigneur: it was before there strutted under a triumphal arch of curls, and through a Via Sacra of plumery, Lewis the fourteenth.

Parker. The ally of His Majesty . . .

Marvel. And something more. A gilded organ-pipe, puffed from below for those above to play.

Parker. Respect the cousin . . .

Marvel. I know not whose cousin; but the acknowledged brat of milliner and furrier, with perruquier for godfather. And such forsooth are the *make-believes* we must respect! A nucleus of powder! an efflorescence of frill!

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Parker. Subject and prince stand now upon another footing than formerly.

Marvel. Indeed they do. How dignified is the address of Plutarch to Trajan! how familiar is Pliny's to Vespasian! how tender, how paternal, is Fronto's to Antoninus! how totally free from adulation and servility is Julius Pollux to the ungentle Commodus! Letters were not trampled down disdainfully either in the groves of Antioch or under the colonnades of Palmyra. Not pleasure, the gentle enfeebler of the human intellect; not tyranny and bigotry, its violent assailants; crossed the walk of the philosopher, to stand between him and his speculations. What is more; two ancient religions, the Grecian and Egyptian, met in perfectly good temper at Alexandria, lived and flourished there together for many centuries, united in honouring whatever was worthy of honour in each communion, and never heard of persecution for matters of opinion, until Christianity came and taught it. Thenceforward, for fifteen hundred years, blood has been perpetually spouting from underneath her footsteps; and the wretch, clinging exhausted to the Cross, is left naked by the impostor, who pretends to have stript him only to heal his wounds.

Parker. Presbyterians, and other sectaries, were lately as cruel and hypocritical as any in former times.

Marvel. They were certainly not less cruel, and perhaps even more hypocritical. English hearts were contracted and hardened by an open exposure to the north: they now are collapsing into the putridity of the south. We were ashamed of a beggarly distemper, but parasitical and skin-deep; we are now ostentatious of a gentlemanly one, eating into the very bones.

Parker. Our children may expect from lord Clarendon a fair account of the prime movers in the late disturbances.

Marvel. He knew but one party, and saw it only in its gala suit. He despises those whom he left on the old litter; and he fancies that all who have not risen want the ability to rise. No doubt, he will speak unfavourably of those whom I most esteem: be it so: if their lives and writings do not controvert him, they are unworthy of my defence. Were I upon terms of intimacy with him, I would render him a service, by sending him the best translations, from Greek and Latin authors, of maxims left us by the wisest men; maxims which my friends held longer than their fortunes, and dearer than their

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lives. And are the vapours of such quagmires as Clarendon to overcast the luminaries of mankind? Should a Hyde lift up, I will not say his hand, I will not say his voice, should he lift up his eyes, against a Milton?

Parker. Mr. Milton would have benefited the world much more by coming into its little humours, and by complying with it cheerfully.

Marvel. As the needle turns away from the rising sun, from the meridian, from the occidental, from regions of fragrancy and gold and gems, and moves with unerring impulse to the frosts and deserts of the north, so Milton and some few others, in politics, philosophy, and religion, walk through the busy multitude, wave aside the importunate trader, and, after a momentary oscillation from external agency, are found in the twilight and in the storm, pointing with certain index to the polestar of immutable truth.

Parker. The nation in general thanks him little for what he has been doing.

Marvel. Men who have been unsparing of their wisdom, like ladies who have been unfrugal of their favours, are abandoned by those who owe most to them, and hated or slighted by the rest. I wish beauty in her lost estate had consolations like genius.

Parker. Fie, fie! Mr. Marvel! Consolations for frailty!

Marvel. What wants them more? The reed is cut down, and seldom does the sickle wound the hand that cuts it. There it lies; trampled on, withered, and soon to be blown away.

Parker. We should be careful and circumspect in our pity, and see that it falls on clean ground. Such a laxity of morals can only be taught in Mr. Milton's school. He composed, I remember, a *Treatise on Divorce*, and would have given it great facilities.

Marvel. He proved by many arguments what requires but few: that happiness is better than unhappiness; that, when two persons can not agree, it is wiser and more christianlike that they should not disagree; that, when they cease to love each other, it is something if they be hindered by the gentlest of checks, from running to the extremity of hatred; and lastly, how it conduces to circumspection and forbearance to be aware that the bond of matrimony is not indissoluble, and that the bleeding heart may be saved from bursting.

Parker. Monstrous sophistry! abominable doctrines! What more, sir! what more?

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Marvel. He proceeds to demonstrate that boisterous manners, captious contradictions, jars, jealousies, suspicions, dissensions, are juster causes of separation than the only one leading to it through the laws. Which fault, grievous as it is to morality and religion, may have occurred but once, and may have been followed by immediate and most sorrowful repentance, and by a greater anxiety to be clear of future offence than before it was committed. In itself it is not so irreconcilable and inconsistent with gentleness, good-humour, generosity, and even conjugal affection.

Parker. Palpable perversion!

Marvel. I suppose it to have been committed but once, and then there is the fairest inference, the most reasonable as well as the most charitable supposition, nay, almost the plainest proof, of the more legitimate attachment.

Parker. Fear, apprehension of exposure, of shame, of abandonment, may force the vagrant to retrace her steps.

Marvel. God grant, then, the marks of them never may be discovered!

Parker. Let the laws have their satisfaction.

Marvel. Had ever the Harpies theirs, or the Devil his? and yet when were they stinted? Are the laws or are we the better or the milder for this satisfaction? or is keenness of appetite a sign of it?

Parker. Reverence the laws of God, Mr. Marvel, if you contemn those of your country. Even the parliament, which you and Mr. Milton must respect, since no king was coexistent with it, discountenanced and chastised such laxity.

Marvel. I dare not look back upon a parliament which was without the benefit of a king, and had also lost its spiritual guides, the barons of your bench: but well do I remember that our blessed Lord and Saviour was gentler in his rebuke to the woman who had offended, than he was to Scribes and Pharisees.

Parker. There is no argument of any hold on men of slippery morals.

Marvel. My morals have indeed been so slippery that they have let me down on the ground and left me there. Every year I have grown poorer; yet never was I conscious of having spent my money among the unworthy, until the time came for them to show it by their ingratitude. My morals have not made me slip into an episcopal throne . . .

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Parker. Neither have mine me, sir! and I would have you to know it, Mr. Marvel!

Marvel. Your lordship has already that satisfaction.

Parker. Pardon my interruption, my dear sir! and the appearance of warmth, such as truth and sincerity at times put on.

Marvel. It belongs to your lordship to grant pardon; it is ours who have offended, to receive it.

Parker. Mr. Marvel! I have always admired your fine gentlemanly manners, and regretted that you never have turned your wit to good account, in an age when hardly anything else is held of value. Sound learning rises indeed, but rises slowly: piety, although in estimation with the king, is less prized by certain persons who have access to the presence: wit, Mr. Marvel, when properly directed, not too high nor too low, will sooner or later find a patron. It is well at all times to avoid asperity and acrimony, and to submit with a willing mind to God's dispensations, be what they may. Probably a great part of your friend's misfortunes may be attributed to the intemperance of his rebukes.

Marvel. Then what you call immoral and impious did him less harm?

Parker. I would not say *that* altogether. To me indeed his treatise on *Divorce* is most offensive: the treatise on *Prelaty* is contemptible.

Marvel. Nevertheless, in the narrow view of my humble understanding, there is no human eloquence at all comparable to certain parts of it. And permit me to remind your lordship that you continued on the most friendly terms with him long after its publication.

Parker. I do not give up a friend for a trifle.

Marvel. Your lordship, it appears, must have more than a trifle for the surrender. I have usually found that those who make faults of foibles, and crimes of faults, have within themselves an impulse toward worse, and give ready way to such impulse whenever they can secretly or safely. There is a gravity which is not austere nor captious, which belongs not to melancholy, nor dwells in contraction of heart, but arises from tenderness and hangs upon reflection.

Parker. Whatsoever may be the gravity of Mr. Milton, I have heard indistinctly that he has not always been the kindest of husbands. Being a sagacious and a prudent man, he ought never to have taken a wife until he had ascertained her character.

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Marvel. Pray inform me whether the wisest men have been the most fortunate, or, if you prefer the expression, the most provident, in their choice. Of Solomon's wives (several hundreds) is it recorded that a single one sympathized with him, loved him, respected him, or esteemed him? His wisdom and his poetry flowed alike on barren sand; his cedar frowned on him; his lily drooped and withered, before he had raised up his head from its hard cold glossiness, or had inhaled its fragrance with a second sigh. Disappointments sour most the less experienced. Young ladies are ready in imagining that marriage is all cake and kisses; but very few of them are housewives long, before they discover that the vinous fermentation may be followed too soon by the acetous. Rarely do they discover, and more rarely do they admit, that such is the result of their own mismanagement. What woman can declare with sincerity, that she never in the calmer days of life has felt surprise, and shame also, if she is virtuous and sensible, at recollecting how nearly the same interest was excited in her by the most frivolous and least frivolous of her admirers. The downy thistle-seed, hard to be uprooted, is carried by the lightest breath of air, and takes an imperceptible hold on what it catches: it falls the more readily into the more open breast, but sometimes the less open is vainly buttoned up against it.

Milton has, I am afraid, imitated too closely the authoritative voice of the patriarchs, and been somewhat too oriental (I forbear to say Scriptural) in his relations as a husband. But who, whether among the graver or less grave, is just to woman? There may be moments when the beloved tells us, and tells us truly, that we are dearer to her than life. Is not this enough? is it not above all merit? Yet, if ever the ardour of her enthusiasm subsides; if her love ever loses, later in the day, the spirit and vivacity of its early dawn; if between the sigh and the blush an interval is perceptible; if the arm mistakes the chair for the shoulder; what an outcry is there! what a proclamation of her injustice and her inconstancy! what an alternation of shrinking and spurning at the coldness of her heart! Do we ask within if our own has retained all its ancient loyalty, all its own warmth, and all that was poured into it? Often the true lover has little of true love compared with what he has undeservedly received and unreasonably exacts. But let it also be remembered that marriage is the metempsychosis of women; that it turns them into different creatures from what they were before. Liveliness in the girl may

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have been mistaken for good temper: the little pervicacity which at first is attractively provoking, at last provokes without its attractiveness: negligence of order and propriety, of duties and civilities, long endured, often deprecated, ceases to be tolerable, when children grow up and are in danger of following the example. It often happens that, if a man unhappy in the married state were to disclose the manifold causes of his uneasiness, they would be found, by those who were beyond their influence, to be of such a nature as rather to excite derision than sympathy. The waters of bitterness do not fall on his head in a cataract, but through a colander; one however like the vases of the Danaides, perforated only for replenishment. We know scarcely the vestibule of a house of which we fancy we have penetrated into all the corners. We know not how grievously a man may have suffered, long before the calumnies of the world befell him as he reluctantly left his house-door. There are women from whom incessant tears of anger swell forth at imaginary wrongs; but of contrition for their own delinquencies, not one.

Milton, in writing his treatise, of which probably the first idea was suggested from his own residence, was aware that the laws should provide, not only against our violence and injustice, but against our levity and inconstancy; and that a man's capriciousness or satiety should not burst asunder the ties by which families are united. Do you believe that the crime of adultery has never been committed to the end of obtaining a divorce? Do you believe that murder, that suicide, never has been committed because a divorce was unattainable? Thus the most cruel tortures are terminated by the most frightful crimes. Milton has made his appeal to the authority of religion: we lower our eyes from him, and point to the miseries and guilt on every side before us, caused by the corrosion or the violent disruption of bonds which humanity would have loosened. He would have tried with a patient ear and with a delicate hand the chord that offended by its harshness; and, when he could not reduce it to the proper tone, he would remove it for another.

Parker. Mr. Marvel! Mr. Marvel! I can not follow you among these fiddlesticks. The age is notoriously irreligious.

Marvel. I believe it; I know it; and, without a claim to extraordinary acuteness, I fancy I can discover by what means, and by whose agency, it became so. The preachers who exhibit most vehemence are the very men who support the worst corruptions;

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corruptions not a portion of our nature, but sticking thereto by our slovenly supineness. Of what use is it to rail against our infirmities, of what use even to pity and bemoan them, if we help not in removing the evils that rise perpetually out of them? Were every man to sweep the mire from before his house every morning, he would have little cause to complain of dirty streets. Some dust might be carried into them by the wind; the tread of multitudes would make unsound what was solid; yet, nothing being accumulated, the labour of removing the obstructions would be light. Another thing has increased the irreligion and immorality of the people, beside examples in elevated stations. Whatever is overconstrained will relax or crack. The age of Milton (for that was his age in which he was heard and honoured) was too religious, if anything can be called so. Prelaty now lays a soft and frilled hand upon our childishness. Forty years ago she stripped up her sleeve, scourged us heartily, and spat upon us . . . to remove the smart, no doubt! This treatment made people run in all directions from her; not unlike the primeval man described by Lucretius, fleeing before the fiercer and stronger animals:

> Viva videns vivo sepeliri viscera busto,
> At quos ecfugium servarat, corpore adeso
> Posterius, tremulas super ulcera tetra tenentes
> Palmas, horrificis adcibant vocibus orcum.

Parker. Dear me! what a memory you possess, good Mr. Marvel; you pronounce Latin verses charmingly. I wish you would go on to the end of the book.

Marvel. Permit me to go on a shorter distance: to the conclusion of my remarks. As Popery caused the violence of the Reformers, so did Prelaty (the same thing under another name) the violence of the Presbyterians and Anabaptists. She treated them inhumanly: she reduced to poverty, she exiled, she maimed, she mutilated, she stabbed, she shot, she hanged, those who followed Christ in the narrow and quiet lane, rather than along the dust of the market-road, and who conversed with him rather in the cottage than the toll-booth. She would have nothing pass unless through her hands; and she imposed a heavy and intolerable tax on the necessaries both of physical and of spiritual life. This baronial privilege our parliament would have suppressed: the king rose against the suppression, and broke his knuckles in the cogs of the mill.

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Parker. Sad times, Mr. Marvel! sad times! It fills me with heaviness to hear of them.

Marvel. Low places are foggy first: days of sadness wet the people to the skin: they hang loosely for some time upon the ermine, but at last they penetrate it, and cause it to be thrown off. I do not like to hear a man cry out with pain; but I would rather hear one than twenty. Sorrow is the growth of all seasons: we had much however to relieve it. Never did our England, since she first emerged from the ocean, rise so high above surrounding nations. The rivalry of Holland, the pride of Spain, the insolence of France, were thrust back by one finger each: yet those countries were then more powerful than they had ever been. The sword of Cromwell was preceded by the mace of Milton; by that mace which, when Oliver had rendered his account, opened to our contemplation the garden-gate of Paradise. And there were some around not unworthy to enter with him. In the compass of sixteen centuries, you will not number on the whole earth so many wise and admirable men as you could have found united in that single day, when England showed her true magnitude, and solved the question, *Which is most, one or a million?* There were giants in those days; but giants who feared God, and not who fought against him. Less men, it appears, are braver. They show him a legal writ of ejectment, seize upon his house, and riotously carouse therein. But the morning must come; and heaviness, we know, cometh in the morning.

Parker. Wide is the difference between carousal and austerity. Your friend miscalculated the steps to fortune, in which, as we all are the architects of our own, if we omit the insertion of one or two, the rest are useless in farthering our ascent. He was too passionate, Mr. Marvel! he was indeed.

Marvel. Superficial men have no absorbing passion: there are no whirlpools in a shallow. I have often been amused at thinking in what estimation the greatest of mankind were holden by their contemporaries. Not even the most sagacious and prudent one could discover much of them, or could prognosticate their future course in the infinity of space! Men like ourselves are permitted to stand near and indeed in the very presence of Milton: what do they see? dark clothes, grey hair, and sightless eyes! Other men have better things: other men therefore are nobler! The stars themselves are only bright by distance; go close, and all is earthy. But vapours

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illuminate these: from the breath and from the countenance of God comes light on worlds higher than they; worlds to which he has given the forms and names of Shakespeare and of Milton.

Parker. After all, I doubt whether much of his doctrine is remaining in the public mind.

Marvel. Others are not inclined to remember all that we remember, and will not attend to us if we propose to tell them half. Water will take up but a certain quantity of salt, even of the finest and purest. If the short memories of men are to be quoted against the excellence of instruction, your lordship would never have censured them from the pulpit for forgetting what was delivered by their Saviour. It is much, my lord bishop, that you allow my friend even the pittance of praise you have bestowed: for, if you will permit me to express my sentiments in verse, which I am in the habit of doing, I would say,

> Men like the ancient kalends, nones, and ides,
> Are reckoned backward, and the first stand last.

I am confident that Milton is heedless of how little weight he is held by those who are of none; and that he never looks toward those somewhat more eminent, between whom and himself there have crept the waters of oblivion. As the pearl ripens in the obscurity of its shell, so ripens in the tomb all the fame that is truly precious. In fame he will be happier than in friendship. Were it possible that one among the faithful of the angels could have suffered wounds and dissolution in his conflict with the false, I should scarcely feel greater awe at discovering on some bleak mountain the bones of this our mighty defender, once shining in celestial panoply, once glowing at the trumpet-blast of God, but not proof against the desperate and the damned, than I have felt at entering the humble abode of Milton, whose spirit already reaches heaven, yet whose corporeal frame hath no quiet or safe resting-place here below. And shall not I, who loved him early, have the lonely and sad privilege to love him still? or shall fidelity to power be a virtue, and fidelity to tribulation an offence?

Parker. We may best show our fidelity by our discretion. It becomes my station, and suits my principles, to defend the English Constitution, both in church and state.

Marvel. You highly praised the *Defence of the English People:* you called it a masterly piece of rhetoric and ratiocination.

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Parker. I might have admired the subtilty of it, and have praised the Latinity.

Marvel. Less reasonably. But his godlike mind shines gloriously throughout his work; only perhaps we look the more intently at it for the cloud it penetrates. Those who think we have enough of his poetry, still regret that we possess too little of his prose, and wish especially for more of his historical compositions. Davila and Bacon . . .

Parker. You mean Lord Verulam.

Marvel. That idle title was indeed thrown over his shoulders: but the trapping was unlikely to rest long upon a creature of such proud paces. He and Davila are the only men of high genius among the moderns who have attempted it; and the greater of them has failed. He wanted honesty, he perverted facts, he courted favor: the present in his eyes was larger than the future.

Parker. The Italians, who far excell us in the writing of history, are farther behind the ancients.

Marvel. True enough. From Guicciardini and Machiavelli, the most celebrated of them, we acquire a vast quantity of trivial information. There is about them a sawdust which absorbs much blood and impurity, and of which the level surface is dry: but no traces by what agency rose such magnificent cities above the hovels of France and Germany: none

Ut fortis Etruria crevit,

or, on the contrary, how the mistress of the world sank in the ordure of her priesthood.

Scilicet et rerum facta est nequissima Roma.

We are captivated by no charms of description, we are detained by no peculiarities of character: we hear a clamorous scuffle in the street, and we close the door. How different the historians of antiquity! We read Sallust, and always are incited by the desire of reading on, although we are surrounded by conspirators and barbarians: we read Livy, until we imagine we are standing in an august pantheon, covered with altars and standards, over which are the four fatal letters that spell-bound all mankind.* We step forth

* S. P. Q. R.

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again among the modern Italians: here we find plenty of rogues, plenty of receipts for making more; and little else. In the best passages we come upon a crowd of dark reflections, which scarcely a glimmer of glory pierces through; and we stare at the tenuity of the spectres, but never at their altitude.

Give me the poetical mind, the mind poetical in all things; give me the poetical heart, the heart of hope and confidence, that beats the more strongly and resolutely under the good thrown down, and raises up fabric after fabric on the same foundation.

Parker. At your time of life, Mr. Marvel?

Marvel. At mine, my lord bishop! I have lived with Milton. Such creative and redeeming spirits are like kindly and renovating Nature. Volcano comes after volcano, yet covereth she with herbage and foliage, with vine and olive, and with whatever else refreshes and gladdens her, the Earth that has been gasping under the exhaustion of her throes.

Parker. He has given us such a description of Eve's beauty as appears to me somewhat too pictorial, too luxuriant, too suggestive, too . . . I know not what.

Marvel. The sight of beauty, in her purity and beatitude, turns us from all unrighteousness, and is death to sin.

Parker. Before we part, my good Mr. Marvel, let me assure you that we part in amity, and that I bear no resentment in my breast against your friend. I am patient of Mr. Milton; I am more than patient, I am indulgent, seeing that his influence on society is past.

Marvel. Past it is indeed. What a deplorable thing is it that Folly should so constantly have power over Wisdom, and Wisdom so intermittently over Folly! But we live morally, as we used to live politically, under a representative system; and the majority (to employ a phrase of people at elections) carries the day.

Parker. Let us piously hope, Mr. Marvel, that God in his good time may turn Mr. Milton from the error of his ways, and incline his heart to repentance, and that so he may finally be prepared for death.

Marvel. The wicked can never be prepared for it, the good always are. What is the preparation which so many ruffled wrists point out? To gabble over prayer and praise and confession and contrition. My lord! Heaven is not to be won by short hard work at the last,

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as some of us take a degree at the university, after much irregularity and negligence. I prefer a steady pace from the outset to the end, coming in cool, and dismounting quietly. Instead of which, I have known many old playfellows of the devil spring up suddenly from their beds and strike at him treacherously; while he, without a cuff, laughed and made grimaces in the corner of the room.

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XX. STEELE AND ADDISON.

Addison. Dick! I am come to remonstrate with you on those unlucky habits which have been so detrimental to your health and fortune.

Steele. Many thanks, Mr. Addison; but really my fortune is not much improved by your arresting me for the hundred pounds; nor is my health, if spirits are an indication of it, on seeing my furniture sold by auction to raise the money.

Addison. Pooh, pooh, Dick! what furniture had you about the house?

Steele. At least I had the arm-chair, of which you never before had dispossessed me longer than the evening; and happy should I have been to enjoy your company in it again and again, if you had left it me.

Addison. We will contrive to hire another. I do assure you, my dear Dick, I have really felt for you.

Steele. I only wish, my kind friend, you had not put out your feelers quite so far, nor exactly in this direction; and that my poor wife had received an hour's notice; she might have carried a few trinkets to some neighbour. She wanted her salts; and the bailiff thanked her for the bottle that contained them, telling her the gold head of it was worth pretty nearly half-a-guinea.

Addison. Lady Steele then wanted her smelling-bottle? Dear me! the weather, I apprehend, is about to change. Have you any symptoms of your old gout?

Steele. My health has been long on the decline, you know.

Addison. Too well I know it, my dear friend, and I hinted it as delicately as I could. Nothing on earth beside this consideration

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should have induced me to pursue a measure in appearance so unfriendly. You must grow more temperate . . you really must.

Steele. Mr. Addison, you did not speak so gravely and so firmly when we used to meet at Will's. You always drank as much as I did, and often invited and pressed me to continue, when I was weary, sleepy, and sick.

Addison. You thought so, because you were drunk. Indeed, at my own house I have sometimes asked you to take another glass, in compliance with the rules of society and hospitality.

Steele. Once, it is true, you did it at your house; the only time I ever had an invitation to dine in it. The Countess was never fond of the wit that smells of wine: her husband could once endure it.

Addison. We could talk more freely, you know, at the tavern. There we have dined together some hundred times.

Steele. Most days, for many years.

Addison. Ah Dick! Since we first met there, several of our friends are gone off the stage.

Steele. And some are still acting.

Addison. Forbear, my dear friend, to joke and smile at infirmities or vices. Many have departed from us, in consequence, I apprehend, of indulging in the bottle! When passions are excited, when reason is disturbed, when reputation is sullied, when fortune is squandered, and when health is lost by it, a retreat is sounded in vain. Some can not hear it, others will not profit by it.

Steele. I must do you the justice to declare, that I never saw any other effect of hard drinking upon you, than to make you more circumspect and silent.

Addison. If ever I urged you, in the warmth of my heart, to transgress the bounds of sobriety, I entreat you, as a Christian, to forgive me.

Steele. Most willingly, most cordially.

Addison. I feel confident that you will think of me, speak of me, and write of me, as you have ever done, without a diminution of esteem. We are feeble creatures; we want one another's aid and assistance; a want ordained by Providence, to show us at once our insufficiency and our strength. We must not abandon our friends from slight motives, nor let our passions be our interpreters in their own cause. Consistency is not more requisite to the sound Christian, than to the accomplished politician.

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Steele. I am inconsistent in my resolutions of improvement . . no man ever was more so; but my attachments have a nerve in them neither to be deadened by ill treatment nor loosened by indulgence. A man grievously wounded, knows by the acuteness of the pain that a spirit of vitality is yet in him. I know that I retain my friendship for you by what you have made me suffer.

Addison. Entirely for your own good, I do protest, if you could see it.

Steele. Alas! all our sufferings are so; the only mischief is, that we have no organs for perceiving it.

Addison. You reason well, my worthy sir; and relying on your kindness in my favour (for every man has enemies, and those mostly who serve their friends best) I say, Dick, on these considerations, since you never broke your word with me, and since I am certain you would be sorry it were known that only four-score pounds' worth could be found in the house, I renounce for the present the twenty yet wanting. Do not beat about for an answer: say not one word: farewell.

Steele. Ah! could not that cold heart,* often and long as I reposed on it, bring me to my senses! I have indeed been drunken; but it is hard to awaken in such heaviness as this of mine is. I shared his poverty with him; I never aimed to share his prosperity. Well, well; I can not break old habits. I love my glass; I love Addison. Each will partake in killing me. Why can not I see him again in the arm-chair, his right hand upon his heart under the fawn-coloured waistcoat, his brow erect and clear as his conscience; his wig even and composed as his temper, with measurely curls and antithetical top-knots, like his style; the calmest poet, the most quiet patriot; dear Addison! drunk, deliberate, moral, sentimental, foaming over with truth and virtue, with tenderness and friendship, and only the worse in one ruffle for the wine.

* Doubts are now entertained whether the character of Addison is fairly represented by Pope and Johnson. It is better to make this statement than to omit a *Conversation* which had appeared elsewhere.

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XXI. LA FONTAINE AND DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULT.

La Fontaine. I am truly sensible of the honour I receive, M. de la Rochefoucault, in a visit from a personage so distinguished by his birth and by his genius. Pardon my ambition, if I confess to you that I have long and ardently wished for the good fortune, which I never could promise myself, of knowing you personally.

Rochefoucault. My dear M. de la Fontaine!

La Fontaine. Not '*de* la,' not '*de* la.' I am *La* Fontaine purely and simply.

Rochefoucault. The whole; not derivative. You appear, in the midst of your purity, to have been educated at court, in the lap of the ladies. What was the last day (pardon!) I had the misfortune to miss you there?

La Fontaine. I never go to court. They say one can not go without silk stockings; and I have only thread; plenty of them indeed, thank God! Yet, would you believe it? Nanon, in putting a *solette* to the bottom of one, last week, sewed it so carelessly, she made a kind of cord across: and I verily believe it will lame me for life; for I walked the whole morning upon it.

Rochefoucault. She ought to be whipt.

La Fontaine. I thought so too, and grew the warmer at being unable to find a wisp of osier or a roll of packthread in the house. Barely had I begun with my garter, when in came the bishop of Grasse, my old friend Godeau, and another lord, whose name he mentioned, and they both interceded for her so long and so touchingly, that at last I was fain to let her rise up and go. I never saw men look down on the erring and afflicted more compassionately. The bishop was quite concerned for me also. But the other, although

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he professed to feel even more, and said that it must surely be the pain of purgatory to me, took a pinch of snuff, opened his waistcoat, drew down his ruffles, and seemed rather more indifferent.

Rochefoucault. Providentially, in such moving scenes, the worst is soon over. But Godeau's friend was not too sensitive.

La Fontaine. Sensitive! no more than if he had been educated at the butcher's or the Sorbonne.

Rochefoucault. I am afraid there are as many hard hearts under satin waistcoats, as there are ugly visages under the same material in miniature-cases.

La Fontaine. My lord, I could show you a miniature-case which contains your humble servant, in which the painter has done what no tailor in his senses would do; he has given me credit for a coat of violet silk, with silver frogs as large as tortoises. But I am loth to get up for it while the generous heart of this dog (if I mentioned his name he would jump up) places such confidence on my knee.

Rochefoucault. Pray do not move on any account; above all, lest you should disturb that amiable grey cat, fast asleep in his innocence on your shoulder.

La Fontaine. Ah rogue! art thou there? Why! thou hast not licked my face this half-hour.

Rochefoucault. And more too, I should imagine. I do not judge from his somnolency, which, if he were President of the Parliament, could not be graver, but from his natural sagacity. Cats weigh practicabilities. What sort of tongue has he?

La Fontaine. He has the roughest tongue and the tenderest heart of any cat in Paris. If you observe the colour of his coat, it is rather blue than grey; a certain indication of goodness in these contemplative creatures.

Rochefoucault. We were talking of his tongue alone; by which cats, like men, are flatterers.

La Fontaine. Ah! you gentlemen of the court are much mistaken in thinking that vices have so extensive a range. There are some of our vices, like some of our diseases, from which the quadrupeds are exempt; and those, both diseases and vices, are the most discreditable.

Rochefoucault. I do not bear patiently any evil spoken of the court: for it must be acknowledged, by the most malicious, that the court is the purifier of the whole nation.

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La Fontaine. I know little of the court, and less of the whole nation; but how can this be?

Rochefoucault. It collects all ramblers and gamblers; all the market-men and market-women who deal in articles which God has thrown into their baskets, without any trouble on their part; all the seducers and all who wish to be seduced; all the duellists who erase their crimes with their swords, and sweat out their cowardice with daily practice; all the nobles whose patents of nobility lie in gold snuff-boxes, or have worn Mechlin ruffles, or are deposited within the archives of knee-deep waistcoats; all stock-jobbers and church-jobbers, the black-legged and the red-legged game, the flower of the *justaucorps*, the *robe*, and the *soutane*. If these were spread over the surface of France, instead of close compressure in the court or cabinet, they would corrupt the whole country in two years. As matters now stand, it will require a quarter of a century to effect it.

La Fontaine. Am I not right then in preferring my beasts to yours? But if yours were loose, mine (as you prove to me) would be the last to suffer by it, poor dear creatures! Speaking of cats, I would have avoided all personality that might be offensive to them: I would not exactly have said, in so many words, that, by their tongues, they are flatterers, like men. Language may take a turn advantageously in favour of our friends. True, we resemble all animals in something. I am quite ashamed and mortified that your lordship, or anybody, should have had the start of me in this reflection. When a cat flatters with his tongue he is not insincere: you may safely take it for a real kindness. He is loyal, M. de la Rochefoucault! my word for him, he is loyal. Observe too, if you please, no cat ever licks you when he wants anything from you; so that there is nothing of baseness in such an act of adulation, if we must call it so. For my part, I am slow to designate by so foul a name, that (be it what it may) which is subsequent to a kindness. Cats ask plainly for what they want.

Rochefoucault. And, if they can not get it by protocols, they get it by invasion and assault.

La Fontaine. No! no! usually they go elsewhere, and fondle those from whom they obtain it. In this I see no resemblance to invaders and conquerors. I draw no parallels: I would excite no heart-burnings between us and them. Let all have their due.

I do not like to lift this creature off, for it would waken him, else

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I could find out, by some subsequent action, the reason why he has not been on the alert to lick my cheek for so long a time.

Rochefoucault. Cats are wary and provident. He would not enter into any contests with you, however friendly. He only licks your face, I presume, while your beard is but a match for his tongue.

La Fontaine. Ha! you remind me. Indeed I did begin to think my beard was rather of the roughest; for yesterday Madame de Rambouillet sent me a plate of strawberries, the first of the season, and raised (would you believe it?) under glass. One of these strawberries was dropping from my lips, and I attempted to stop it. When I thought it had fallen to the ground, "Look for it, Nanon; pick it up and eat it," said I.

"Master!" cried the wench, "your beard has skewered and spitted it." "Honest girl," I answered, "come, cull it from the bed of its adoption."

I had resolved to shave myself this morning: but our wisest and best resolutions too often come to nothing, poor mortals!

Rochefoucault. We often do very well everything but the only thing we hope to do best of all; and our projects often drop from us by their weight. A little while ago your friend Molière exhibited a remarkable proof of it.

La Fontaine. Ah, poor Molière! the best man in the world; but flighty, negligent, thoughtless. He throws himself into other men, and does not remember where. The sight of an eagle, M. de la Rochefoucault, but the memory of a fly!

Rochefoucault. I will give you an example: but perhaps it is already known to you.

La Fontaine. Likely enough. We have each so many friends, neither of us can trip but the other is invited to the laugh. Well; I am sure he has no malice, and I hope I have none: but who can see his own faults?

Rochefoucault. He had brought out a new edition of his comedies.

La Fontaine. There will be fifty; there will be a hundred: nothing in our language, or in any, is so delightful, so graceful; I will add, so clear at once and so profound.

Rochefoucault. You are among the few who, seeing well his other qualities, see that Molière is also profound. In order to present the new edition to the Dauphin, he had put on a sky-blue velvet coat, powdered with fleur-de-lis. He laid the volume on his library-table;

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and, resolving that none of the courtiers should have an opportunity of ridiculing him for anything like absence of mind, he returned to his bedroom, which, as may often be the case in the economy of poets, is also his dressing-room. Here he surveyed himself in his mirror, as well as the creeks and lagoons in it would permit.

La Fontaine. I do assure you, from my own observation, M. de la Rochefoucault, that his mirror is a splendid one. I should take it to be nearly three feet high, reckoning the frame with the Cupid above and the elephant under. I suspected it was the present of some great lady; and indeed I have since heard as much.

Rochefoucault. Perhaps then the whole story may be quite as fabulous as the part of it which I have been relating.

La Fontaine. In that case, I may be able to set you right again.

Rochefoucault. He found his peruke a model of perfection; tight, yet easy; not an inch more on one side than on the other. The black patch on the forehead . .

La Fontaine. Black patch too! I would have given a fifteen-sous piece to have caught him with that black patch.

Rochefoucault. He found it lovely, marvellous, irresistible. Those on each cheek . .

La Fontaine. Do you tell me he had one on each cheek?

Rochefoucault. Symmetrically. The cravat was of its proper descent, and with its appropriate charge of the best Strasburg snuff upon it. The waistcoat, for a moment, puzzled and perplexed him. He was not quite sure whether the right number of buttons were in their holes; nor how many above, nor how many below, it was the fashion of the week to leave without occupation. Such a piece of ignorance is enough to disgrace any courtier on earth. He was in the act of striking his forehead with desperation; but he thought of the patch, fell on his knees, and thanked heaven for the intervention.

La Fontaine. Just like him! just like him! good soul!

Rochefoucault. The breeches . . ah! those require attention: all proper: everything in its place. Magnificent! The stockings rolled up, neither too loosely nor too negligently. A picture! The buckles in the shoes . . all but one . . soon set to rights . . well thought of! And now the sword . . ah that cursed sword! it will bring at least one man to the ground if it has its own way much longer . . up with it! up with it higher . . *Allons!* we are out of danger.

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La Fontaine. Delightful! I have him before my eyes. What simplicity! aye, what simplicity!

Rochefoucault. Now for hat. Feather in? Five at least. Bravo.

He took up hat and plumage, extended his arm to the full length, raised it a foot above his head, lowered it thereon, opened his fingers, and let them fall again at his side.

La Fontaine. Something of the comedian in that; aye, M. de la Rochefoucault? But, on the stage or off, all is natural in Molière.

Rochefoucault. Away he went: he reached the palace, stood before the Dauphin . . O consternation! O despair! "Morbleu! bête que je suis," exclaimed the hapless man, "le livre, où donc est-il?' You are forcibly struck, I perceive, by this adventure of your friend.

La Fontaine. Strange coincidence! quite unaccountable! There are agents at work in our dreams, M. de la Rochefoucault, which we shall never see out of them, on this side the grave. [*To himself.*] Sky-blue? no. Fleurs-de-lis? bah! bah! Patches? I never wore one in my life.

Rochefoucault. It well becomes your character for generosity, M. la Fontaine, to look grave and ponder, and ejaculate, on a friend's untoward accident, instead of laughing, as those who little know you, might expect. I beg your pardon for relating the occurrence.

La Fontaine. Right or wrong, I can not help laughing any longer. Comical, by my faith! above the tip-top of comedy. Excuse my flashes and dashes and rushes of merriment. Incontrollable! incontrollable! Indeed the laughter is immoderate. And you all the while are sitting as grave as a judge; I mean a criminal one; who has nothing to do but to keep up his popularity by sending his rogues to the gallows. The civil indeed have much weighty matter on their minds: they must displease one party: and sometimes a doubt arises whether the fairer hand or the fuller shall turn the balance.

Rochefoucault. I congratulate you on the return of your gravity and composure.

La Fontaine. Seriously now: all my lifetime I have been the plaything of dreams. Sometimes they have taken such possession of me, that nobody could persuade me afterward they were other than real events. Some are very oppressive, very painful, M. de la Rochefoucault! I have never been able, altogether, to disembarrass my head of the most wonderful vision that ever took possession of any man's. There are some truly important differences, but in many

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respects this laughable adventure of my innocent honest friend, Molière, seemed to have befallen myself. I can only account for it by having heard the tale when I was half-asleep.

Rochefoucault. Nothing more probable.

La Fontaine. You absolutely have relieved me from an incubus.

Rochefoucault. I do not yet see how.

La Fontaine. No longer ago than when you entered this chamber, I would have sworn that I myself had gone to the Louvre, that I myself had been commanded to attend the dauphin, that I myself had come into his presence,* had fallen on my knee, and cried, "Peste! où est donc le livre!" Ah, M. de la Rochefoucault, permit me to embrace you: this is really to find a friend at court.

Rochefoucault. My visit is even more auspicious than I could have ventured to expect: it was chiefly for the purpose of asking your permission to make another at my return to Paris .. I am forced to go into the country on some family affairs: but hearing that you have spoken favourably of my *Maxims*, I presume to express my satisfaction and delight at your good opinion.

La Fontaine. Pray, M. de la Rochefoucault, do me the favour to continue here a few minutes: I would gladly reason with you on some of your doctrines.

Rochefoucault. For the pleasure of hearing your sentiments on the topics I have treated, I will, although it is late, steal a few minutes from the court, of which I must take my leave on parting for the province.

La Fontaine. Are you quite certain that all your Maxims are true, or, what is of greater consequence, that they are all original? I have lately read a treatise written by an Englishman, M. Hobbes; so loyal a man that, while others tell you kings are appointed by God, he tells you God is appointed by kings.

Rochefoucault. Ah! such are precisely the men we want. If he establishes this verity, the rest will follow.

La Fontaine. He does not seem to care so much about the rest. In his treatise I find the ground-plan of your chief positions.

Rochefoucault. I have indeed looked over his publication; and we agree on the natural depravity of man.

La Fontaine. Reconsider your expression. It appears to me that what is natural is not depraved: that depravity is deflection

* This happened.

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from nature. Let it pass: I can not however concede to you that the generality of men are naturally bad. Badness is accidental, like disease. We find more tempers good than bad, where proper care is taken in proper time.

Rochefoucault. Care is not nature.

La Fontaine. Nature is soon inoperative without it; so soon indeed as to allow no opportunity for experiment or hypothesis. Life itself requires care, and more continually than tempers and morals do. The strongest body ceases to be a body in a few days without a supply of food. When we speak of men being naturally bad or good, we mean susceptible and retentive and communicative of them. In this case (and there can be no other true or ostensible one) I believe that the more are good; and nearly in the same proportion as there are animals and plants produced healthy and vigorous than wayward and weakly. Strange is the opinion of M. Hobbes, that, when God hath poured so abundantly his benefits on other creatures, the only one capable of great good should be uniformly disposed to greater evil.

Rochefoucault. Yet Holy Writ, to which Hobbes would reluctantly appeal, countenances the supposition.

La Fontaine. The Jews, above all nations, were morose and splenetic. Nothing is holy to me that lessens in my view the beneficence of my Creator. If you could show him ungentle and unkind in a single instance, you would render myriads of men so, throughout the whole course of their lives, and those too among the most religious. The less that people talk about God, the better. He has left us a design to fill up: he has placed the canvas, the colours, and the pencils, within reach; his directing hand is over ours incessantly; it is our business to follow it, and neither to turn round and argue with our master, nor to kiss and fondle him. We must mind our lesson, and not neglect our time: for the room is closed early, and the lights are suspended in another, where no one works. If every man would do all the good he might within an hour's walk from his house, he would live the happier and the longer: for nothing is so conducive to longevity as the union of activity and content. But, like children, we deviate from the road, however well we know it, and run into mire and puddles in despite of frown and ferule.

Rochefoucault. Go on, M. la Fontaine! pray go on. We are walking in the same labyrinth, always within call, always within

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sight of each other. We set out at its two extremities, and shall meet at last.

La Fontaine. I doubt it. From deficiency of care proceed many vices, both in men and children, and more still from care taken improperly. M. Hobbes attributes not only the order and peace of society, but equity and moderation and every other virtue, to the coercion and restriction of the laws. The laws, as now constituted, do a great deal of good; they also do a great deal of mischief. They transfer more property from the right owner in six months than all the thieves of the kingdom do in twelve. What the thieves take they soon disseminate abroad again; what the laws take they heard. The thief takes a part of your property: he who prosecutes the thief for you takes another part: he who condemns the thief, goes to the tax-gatherer and takes the third. Power has been hitherto occupied in no employment but in keeping down Wisdom. Perhaps the time may come when Wisdom shall exert her energy in repressing the sallies of Power.

Rochefoucault. I think it more probable that they will agree; that they will call together their servants of all liveries, to collect what they can lay their hands upon; and that meanwhile they will sit together like good housewives, making nets from our purses to cover the coop for us. If you would be plump and in feather, pick up your millet and be quiet in your darkness. Speculate on nothing here below, and I promise you a nosegay in Paradise.

La Fontaine. Believe me, I shall be most happy to receive it there at your hands, my lord duke.

The greater number of men, I am inclined to think, with all the defects of education, all the frauds committed on their credulity, all the advantages taken of their ignorance and supineness, are disposed, on most occasions, rather to virtue than to vice, rather to the kindly affections than the unkindly, rather to the social than the selfish.

Rochefoucault. Here we differ: and were my opinion the same as yours, my book would be little read and less commended.

La Fontaine. Why think so?

Rochefoucault. For this reason. Every man likes to hear evil of all men: every man is delighted to take the air of the common, though not a soul will consent to stand within his own allotment. No inclosure-act! no finger-posts! You may call every creature

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under heaven fool and rogue, and your auditor will join with you heartily: hint to him the slighest of his own defects or foibles, and he draws the rapier. You and he are the judges of the world, but not its denizens.

La Fontaine. M. Hobbes has taken advantage of these weaknesses. In his dissertation he betrays the timidity and malice of his character. It must be granted, he reasons well, according to the view he has taken of things; but he has given no proof whatever that his view is a correct one. I will believe that it is, when I am persuaded that sickness is the natural state of the body, and health the unnatural. If you call him a sound philosopher, you may call a mummy a sound man. Its darkness, its hardness, its forced uprightness, and the place in which you find it, may commend it to you: give me rather some weakness and peccability, with vital warmth and human sympathies. A shrewd reasoner is one thing, a sound philosopher is another. I admire your power and precision. Monks will admonish us how little the author of the *Maxims* knows of the world; and heads of colleges will cry out "a libel on human nature!" but when they hear your titles, and, above all, your credit at court, they will cast back cowl and peruke, and lick your boots. You start with great advantages. Throwing off from a dukedom, you are sure of enjoying, if not the tongue of these puzzlers, the full cry of the more animating, and will certainly be as long-lived as the imperfection of our language will allow. I consider your *Maxims* as a broken ridge of hills, on the shady side of which you are fondest of taking your exercise: but the same ridge hath also a sunny one. You attribute (let me say it again) all actions to self-interest. Now a sentiment of interest must be preceded by calculation, long or brief, right or erroneous. Tell me then in what region lies the origin of that pleasure which a family in the country feels on the arrival of an unexpected friend. I say a family in the country; because the sweetest souls, like the sweetest flowers, soon canker in cities, and no purity is rarer there than the purity of delight. If I may judge from the few examples I have been in a position to see, no earthly one can be greater. There are pleasures which lie near the surface, and which are blocked up by artificial ones, or are diverted by some mechanical scheme, or are confined by some stiff evergreen vista of low advantage. But these pleasures do occasionally burst forth in all their brightness; and, if ever you shall by chance find one of them,

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you will sit by it, I hope, complacently and cheerfully, and turn toward it the kindliest aspect of your meditations.

Rochefoucault. Many, indeed most people, will differ from me. Nothing is quite the same to the intellect of any two men, much less of all. When one says to another, "I am entirely of your opinion," he uses in general an easy and indifferent phrase, believing in its accuracy, without examination, without thought. The nearest resemblance in opinions, if we could trace every line of it, would be found greatly more divergent than the nearest in the human form or countenance, and in the same proportion as the varieties of mental qualities are more numerous and fine than of the bodily. Hence I do not expect nor wish that my opinions should in all cases be similar to those of others: but in many I shall be gratified if, by just degrees and after a long survey, those of others approximate to mine. Nor does this my sentiment spring from a love of power, as in many good men quite unconsciously, when they would make proselytes, since I shall see few and converse with fewer of them, and profit in no way by their adherence and favour; but it springs from a natural and a cultivated love of all truths whatever, and from a certainty that these delivered by me are conducive to the happiness and dignity of man. You shake your head.

La Fontaine. Make it out.

Rochefoucault. I have pointed out to him at what passes he hath deviated from his true interest, and where he hath mistaken selfishness for generosity, coldness for judgment, contraction of heart for policy, rank for merit, pomp for dignity; of all mistakes, the commonest and the greatest. I am accused of paradox and distortion. On paradox I shall only say, that every new moral truth has been called so. Inexperienced and negligent observers see no difference in the operations of raveling and unraveling: they never come close enough: they despise plain work.

La Fontaine. The more we simplify things, the better we descry their substances and qualities. A good writer will not coil them up and press them into the narrowest possible space, nor macerate them into such particles that nothing shall be remaining of their natural contexture. You are accused of this too, by such as have forgotten your title-page, and who look for treatises where maxims only have been promised. Some of them perhaps are spinning out sermons and dissertations from the poorest paragraph in the volume.

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Rochefoucault. Let them copy and write as they please; against or for, modestly or impudently. I have hitherto had no assailant who is not of too slender a make to be detained an hour in the stocks he has unwarily put his foot into. If you hear of any, do not tell of them. On the subjects of my remarks, had others thought as I do, my labour would have been spared me. I am ready to point out the road where I know it, to whosoever wants it; but I walk side by side with few or none.

La Fontaine. We usually like those roads which show us the fronts of our friends' houses and the pleasure-grounds about them, and the smooth garden-walks, and the trim espaliers, and look at them with more satisfaction than at the docks and nettles that are thrown in heaps behind. The *Offices* of Cicero are imperfect; yet who would not rather guide his children by them than by the line and compass of harder-handed guides; such as Hobbes for instance?

Rochefoucault. Imperfect as some gentlemen in hoods may call the *Offices*, no founder of a philosophical or of a religious sect has been able to add to them anything important.

La Fontaine. Pity! that Cicero carried with him no better authorities than reason and humanity. He neither could work miracles, nor damn you for disbelieving them. Had he lived fourscore years later, who knows but he might have been another Simon Peter, and have talked Hebrew as fluently as Latin, all at once! Who knows but we might have heard of his patrimony! who knows but our venerable popes might have claimed dominion from him, as descendant from the kings of Rome!

Rochefoucault. The hint, some centuries ago, would have made your fortune, and that saintly cat there would have kittened in a mitre.

La Fontaine. Alas! the hint could have done nothing: Cicero could not have lived later.

Rochefoucault. I warrant him. Nothing is easier to correct than chronology. There is not a lady in Paris, nor a jockey in Normandy, that is not eligible to a professor's chair in it. I have seen a man's ancestor, whom nobody ever saw before, spring back over twenty generations. Our Vatican Jupiters have as little respect for old Chronos as the Cretan had: they mutilate him when and where they think necessary, limp as he may by the operation.

La Fontaine. When I think, as you make me do, how ambitious

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men are, even those whose teeth are too loose (one would fancy) for a bite at so hard an apple as the devil of ambition offers them, I am inclined to believe that we are actuated not so much by selfishness as you represent it, but under another form, the love of power. Not to speak of territorial dominion or political office, and such other things as we usually class under its appurtenances, do we not desire an exclusive control over what is beautiful and lovely? the possession of pleasant fields, of well-situated houses, of cabinets, of images, of pictures, and indeed of many things pleasant to see but useless to possess; even of rocks, of streams, and of fountains? These things, you will tell me, have their utility. True, but not to the wisher, nor does the idea of it enter his mind. Do not we wish that the object of our love should be devoted to us only; and that our children should love us better than their brothers and sisters, or even than the mother who bore them? Love would be arrayed in the purple robe of sovranty, mildly as he may resolve to exercise his power.

Rochefoucault. Many things which appear to be incontrovertible, are such for their age only, and must yield to others which, in their age, are equally so. There are only a few points that are always above the waves. Plain truths, like plain dishes, are commended by everybody, and everybody leaves them whole. If it were not even more impertinent and presumptuous to praise a great writer in his presence than to censure him in his absence, I would venture to say that your prose, from the few specimens you have given of it, is equal to your verse. Yet, even were I the possessor of such a style as yours, I would never employ it to support my Maxims. You would think a writer very impudent and self-sufficient who should quote his own works: to defend them is doing more. We are the worst auxiliaries in the world to the opinions we have brought into the field. Our business is, to measure the ground, and to calculate the forces; then let them try their strength. If the weak assails me, he thinks me weak; if the strong, he thinks me strong. He is more likely to compute ill his own vigour than mine. At all events, I love inquiry, even when I myself sit down. And I am not offended in my walks if my visitor asks me whither does that alley lead? It proves that he is ready to go on with me; that he sees some space before him; and that he believes there may be something worth looking after.

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La Fontaine. You have been standing a long time, my lord duke: I must entreat you to be seated.

Rochefoucault. Excuse me, my dear M. la Fontaine; I would much rather stand.

La Fontaine. Mercy on us! have you been upon your legs ever since you rose to leave me?

Rochefoucault. A change of position is agreeable: a friend always permits it.

La Fontaine. Sad doings! sad oversight! The other two chairs were sent yesterday evening to be scoured and mended. But that dog is the best-tempered dog! an angel of a dog, I do assure you; he would have gone down in a moment, at a word. I am quite ashamed of myself for such inattention. With your sentiments of friendship for me, why could you not have taken the liberty to shove him gently off, rather than give me this uneasiness?

Rochefoucault. My true and kind friend! we authors are too sedentary; we are heartily glad of standing to converse, whenever we can do it without any restraint on our acquaintance.

La Fontaine. I must reprove that animal when he uncurls his body. He seems to be dreaming of Paradise and Houris. Ay, twitch thy ear, my child! I wish at my heart there were as troublesome a fly about the other: God forgive me! The rogue covers all my clean linen! shirt and cravat! what cares he!

Rochefoucault. Dogs are not very modest.

La Fontaine. Never say that, M. de la Rochefoucault! The most modest people upon earth! Look at a dog's eyes; and he half-closes them, or gently turns them away, with a motion of the lips, which he licks languidly, and of the tail, which he stirs tremulously, begging your forbearance. I am neither blind nor indifferent to the defects of these good and generous creatures. They are subject to many such as men are subject to: among the rest, they disturb the neighbourhood in the discussion of their private causes; they quarrel and fight on small motives, such as a little bad food, or a little vain-glory, or the sex. But it must be something present or near that excites them; and they calculate not the extent of evil they may do or suffer.

Rochefoucault. Certainly not: how should dogs calculate?

La Fontaine. I know nothing of the process. I am unable to inform you how they leap over hedges and brooks, with exertion

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just sufficient, and no more. In regard to honour and a sense of dignity, let me tell you, a dog accepts the subsidies of his friends, but never claims them: a dog would not take the field to obtain power for a son, but would leave the son to obtain it by his own activity and prowess. He conducts his visitor or inmate out a-hunting, and makes a present of the game to him as freely as an emperor to an elector. Fond as he is of slumber, which is indeed one of the pleasantest and best things in the universe, particularly after dinner, he shakes it off as willingly as he would a gadfly, in order to defend his master from theft or violence. Let the robber or assailant speak as courteously as he may, he waives your diplomatical terms, gives his reasons in plain language, and makes war. I could say many other things to his advantage; but I never was malicious, and would rather let both parties plead for themselves: give me the dog, however.

Rochefoucault. Faith! I will give you both, and never boast of my largess in so doing.

La Fontaine. I trust I have removed from you the suspicion of selfishness in my client, and I feel it quite as easy to make a properer disposal of another ill attribute, namely cruelty, which we vainly try to shuffle off our own shoulders upon others, by employing the offensive and most unjust term, brutality. But to convince you of my impartiality, now I have defended the dog from the first obloquy, I will defend the man from the last, hoping to make you think better of each. What you attribute to cruelty, both while we are children and afterward, may be assigned for the greater part to curiosity. Cruelty tends to the extinction of life, the dissolution of matter, the imprisonment and sepulture of truth; and if it were our ruling and chief propensity, the human race would have been extinguished in a few centuries after its appearance. Curiosity, in its primary sense, implies care and consideration.

Rochefoucault. Words often deflect from their primary sense. We find the most curious men the most idle and silly, the least observant and conservative.

La Fontaine. So we think; because we see every hour the idly curious, and not the strenuously; we see only the persons of the one set, and only the works of the other.

More is heard of cruelty than of curiosity, because while curiosity is silent both in itself and about its object, cruelty on most occasions

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is like the wind, boisterous in itself, and exciting a murmur and bustle in all the things it moves among. Added to which, many of the higher topics whereto our curiosity would turn, are intercepted from it by the policy of our guides and rulers; while the principal ones on which cruelty is most active, are pointed to by the sceptre and the truncheon, and wealth and dignity are the rewards of their attainment. What perversion! He who brings a bullock into a city for its sustenance is called a butcher, and nobody has the civility to take off the hat to him, although knowing him as perfectly as I know Matthieu le Mince, who served me with those fine kidneys you must have remarked in passing through the kitchen: on the contrary, he who reduces the same city to famine is styled M. le General or M. le Marechal, and gentlemen like you, unprejudiced (as one would think) and upright, make room for him in the antechamber.

Rochefoucault. He obeys orders without the degrading influence of any passion.

La Fontaine. Then he commits a baseness the more, a cruelty the greater. He goes off at another man's setting, as ingloriously as a rat-trap: he produces the worst effects of fury, and feels none: a Cain unirritated by a brother's incense.

Rochefoucault. I would hide from you this little rapier, which, like the barber's pole, I have often thought too obtrusive in the streets.

La Fontaine. Never shall I think my countrymen half civilised while on the dress of a courtier is hung the instrument of a cut-throat. How deplorably feeble must be that honour which requires defending at every hour of the day!

Rochefoucault. Ingenious as you are, M. la Fontaine, I do not believe that, on this subject, you could add anything to what you have spoken already: but really, I do think, one of the most instructive things in the world would be a dissertation on dress by you.

La Fontaine. Nothing can be devised more commodious than the dress in fashion. Perukes have fallen among us by the peculiar dispensation of Providence. As in all the regions of the globe the indigenous have given way to stronger creatures, so have they (partly at least) on the human head. At present the wren and the squirrel are dominant there. Whenever I have a mind for a filbert, I have only to shake my foretop. Improvement does not end in that quarter. I might forget to take my pinch of snuff when it would do me good, unless I saw a store of it on another's cravat. Further-

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more, the slit in the coat behind tells in a moment what it was made for: a thing of which, in regard to ourselves, the best preachers have to remind us all our lives: then the central part of our habiliment has either its loop-hole or its portcullis in the opposite direction, still more demonstrative. All these are for very mundane purposes: but Religion and Humanity have whispered some later utilities. We pray the more commodiously, and of course the more frequently, for rolling up a royal ell of stocking round about our knees: and our high-heeled shoes must surely have been worn by some angel, to save those insects which the flat-footed would have crushed to death.

Rochefoucault. Ah! the good dog has awakened: he saw me and my rapier, and ran away. Of what breed is he? for I know nothing of dogs.

La Fontaine. And write so well!

Rochefoucault. Is he a trufler?

La Fontaine. No, not he; but quite as innocent.

Rochefoucault. Something of the shepherd-dog, I suspect.

La Fontaine. Nor that neither; although he fain would make you believe it. Indeed he is very like one: pointed nose, pointed ears, apparently stiff, but readily yielding; long hair, particularly about the neck; noble tail over his back, three curls deep, exceedingly pleasant to stroke down again; straw-colour all above, white all below. He might take it ill if you looked for it; but so it is, upon my word: an ermeline might envy it.

Rochefoucault. What are his pursuits?

La Fontaine. As to pursuit and occupation, he is good for nothing. In fact, I like those dogs best . . and those men too.

Rochefoucault. Send Nanon then for a pair of silk stockings, and mount my carriage with me: it stops at the Louvre.

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XXII. MELANCTHON AND CALVIN.

Calvin. Are you sure, O Melancthon! that you yourself are among the elect?

Melancthon. My dear brother! so please it God, I would rather be among the many.

Calvin. Of the damned?

Melancthon. Alas! no. But I am inclined to believe that the many will be saved and will be happy, since Christ came into the world for the redemption of sinners.

Calvin. Hath not our Saviour said explicitly, that many are called, but few chosen.

Melancthon. Our Saviour? hath he said it?

Calvin. *Hath* he forsooth! Where is your New Testament?

Melancthon. In my heart.

Calvin. Without this page however.

Melancthon. When we are wiser and more docile, that is, when we are above the jars and turmoils and disputations of the world, our Saviour will vouchsafe to interpret what, through the fumes of our intemperate vanity, is now indistinct or dark. He will plead for us before no inexorable judge. He came to remit the sins of man; not the sins of a few, but of many; not the sins of many, but of all.

Calvin. What! of the benighted heathen too? of the pagan? of the idolater?

Melancthon. I hope so; but I dare not say it.

Calvin. You would include even the negligent, the indifferent, the sceptic, the unbeliever.

Melancthon. Pitying them for a want of happiness in a want of faith. They are my brethren: they are God's children. He will

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pardon the presumption of my wishes for their welfare; my sorrow that they have fallen, some through their blindness, others through their deafness, others through their terror, others through their anger peradventure at the loud denunciations of unforgiving man. If I would forgive a brother, may not he, who is immeasurably better and more merciful, have pity on a child? He came on earth to take our nature upon him: will he punish, will he reprehend us, for an attempt to take as much as may be of his upon ourselves?

Calvin. There is no bearing any such fallacies.

Melancthon. Is it harder to bear these fallacies (as they appear to you, and perhaps are, for we all are fallible, and many even of our best thoughts are fallacies), is it harder, O my friend, to bear these, than to believe in the eternal punishment of the erroneous?

Calvin. *Erroneous* indeed! Have they not the Book of Life, now at last laid open before them, for their guidance?

Melancthon. No, indeed; they have only two or three places, dog-eared and bedaubed, which they are commanded to look into and study. These are so uninviting, that many close again the volume of salvation, clasp it tight, and throw it back in our faces. I would rather show a man green fields than gibbets: and if I called him to enter the service of a plenteous house and powerful master, he may not be rendered the more willing to enter it by my pointing out to him the stocks in the gateway, and telling him that nine-tenths of the household, however orderly, must occupy that position. The book of *good news* under your interpretation, tells people not only that they may go and be damned, but that unless they are lucky, they must inevitably. Again it informs another set of inquirers that if once they have been under what they feel to be the influence of grace, they never can relapse. All must go well who have once gone well; and a name once written in the list of favorites can never be erased.

Calvin. This is certain.

Melancthon. Let us hope then, and in holy confidence let us believe, that the book is large and voluminous; that it begins at an early date of man's existence; and that amid the agitation of inquiry, it comprehends the humble and submissive doubter. For doubt itself, between the richest patrimony and utter destitution, is quite sufficiently painful: and surely it is a hardship to be turned over into a criminal court for having lost in a civil one. But if all who have once gone right can never go astray, how happens it that so large a

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part of the angels fell off from their allegiance? They were purer and wiser than we are, and had the advantage of seeing God face to face. They were the ministers of his power; they knew its extent; yet they defied it. If we err, it is in relying too confidently on his mercies; not in questioning his omnipotence. If our hopes forsake us, if the bonds of sin bruise and corrode us, so that we can not walk upright, there is, in the midst of these calamities, no proof that we are utterly lost. Danger far greater is there in the presumption of an especial favour, which men incomparably better than ourselves can never have deserved. Let us pray, O Calvin, that we may hereafter be happier than our contentions and animosities will permit us to be at present; and that our opponents, whether now in the right or in the wrong, may come at last where all error ceases.

Calvin. I am uncertain whether such a wish is rational: and I doubt more whether it is religious. God hath willed them to walk in their blindness. To hope against it, seems like repining at his unalterable decree; a weak indulgence in an unpermitted desire; an unholy entreaty of the heart that He will forego his vengeance, and abrogate the law that was from the beginning. Of one thing I am certain: we must lop off the unsound.

Melancthon. What a curse hath metaphor been to religion! It is the wedge that holds asunder the two great portions of the Christian world. We hear of nothing so commonly as fire and sword. And here indeed what was metaphor is converted into substance and applied to practice. The unsoundness of doctrine is not cut off nor cauterised; the professor is. The head falls on the scaffold, or fire surrounds the stake, because a doctrine is bloodless and incombustible. Fierce outrageous animals, for want of the man who has escaped them, lacerate and trample his cloak or bonnet. This, although the work of brutes, is not half so brutal as the practice of theologians, seizing the man himself, instead of bonnet or cloak.

Calvin. We must leave such matters to the magistrate.

Melancthon. Let us instruct the magistrate in his duty; this is ours. Unless we can teach humanity, we may resign the charge of religion. For fifteen centuries, Christianity has been conveyed into many houses, in many cities, in many regions, but always through slender pipes; and never yet into any great reservoir in any part of the earth. Its principal ordinances have never been observed in the polity of any state whatever. Abstinence from spoliation, from

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oppression, from bloodshed, has never been inculcated by the chief priests of any. These two facts excite the doubts of many in regard to a divine origin and a divine protection. Wherefore it behoves us the more especially to preach forbearance. If the people are tolerant one toward another in the same country, they will become tolerant in time toward those whom rivers or seas have separated from them. For surely it is strange and wonderful that nations which are near enough for hostility should never be near enough for concord. This arises from bad government; and bad government arises from a negligent choice of counsellors by the prince, usually led or terrified by a corrupt, ambitious, wealthy (and therefore unchristian) priesthood. While their wealth lay beyond the visible horizon, they tarried at the cottage, instead of pricking on for the palace.

Calvin. By the grace and help of God we will turn them back again to their quiet and wholesome resting-place, before the people lay a rough hand upon the silk.

But you evaded my argument on predestination.

Melancthon. Our blessed Lord himself, in his last hours, ventured to express a wish before his heavenly Father, that the bitter cup might pass away from him. I humbly dare to implore that a cup much bitterer may be removed from the great body of mankind; a cup containing the poison of eternal punishment, where agony succeeds to agony, but never death.

Calvin. I come armed with the Gospel.

Melancthon. Tremendous weapon! as we have seen it through many ages, if man wields it against man: but like the fabled spear of old mythology, endued with the faculty of healing the saddest wound its most violent wielder can inflict. Obscured and rusting with the blood upon it, let us hasten to take it up again, and apply it, as best we may, to its appointed uses.

The life of our Saviour is the simplest exposition of his words. Strife is what he both discountenanced and forbade. We ourselves are right-minded, each of us all: and others are right-minded in proportion as they agree with us, chiefly in matters which we insist are well worthy of our adherence, but which whosoever refuses to embrace displays a factious and unchristian spirit. These for the most part are matters which neither they nor we understand, and which, if we did understand them, would little profit us. The weak will be supported by the strong, if they can; if they can not, they

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are ready to be supported even by the weaker, and cry out against the strong, as arrogant or negligent, or deaf or blind; at last even their strength is questioned, and the more if, while there is fury all around them, they are quiet.

I remember no discussion on religion in which religion was not a sufferer by it, if mutual forbearance, and belief in another's good motives and intentions, are (as I must always think they are) its proper and necessary appurtenances.

Calvin. Would you never make inquiries?

Melancthon. Yes; and as deep as possible; but into my own heart; for that belongs to me; and God hath entrusted it most especially to my own superintendence.

Calvin. We must also keep others from going astray, by showing them the right road, and, if they are obstinate in resistance, then by coercing and chastising them through the magistrate.

Melancthon. It is sorrowful to dream that we are scourges in God's hand, and that he appoints for us no better work than lacerating one another. I am no enemy to inquiry, where I see abuses, and where I suspect falsehood. The Romanists, our great oppressors, think it presumptuous to search into things abstruse; and let us do them the justice to acknowledge that, if it is a fault, it is one which they never commit. But surely we are kept sufficiently in the dark by the infirmity of our nature: no need to creep into a corner and put our hands before our eyes. To throw away or turn aside from God's best gifts is verily a curious sign of obedience and submission. He not only hath given us a garden to walk in, but he hath planted it also for us, and he wills us to know the nature and properties of everything that grows up within it. Unless we look into them and handle them and register them, how shall we discover this to be salutary, that to be poisonous; this annual, that perennial?

Calvin. Here we coincide; and I am pleased to find in you less apathy than I expected. It becomes us, moreover, to denounce God's vengeance on a sinful world.

Melancthon. Is it not better and pleasanter to show the wanderer by what course of life it may be avoided? is it not better and pleasanter to enlarge on God's promises of salvation, than to insist on his denunciations of wrath? is it not better and pleasanter to lead the wretched up to his mercy-seat, than to hurl them by thousands under his fiery chariot?

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Calvin. We have no option. By our heavenly Father many are called, but few are chosen.

Melancthon. There is scarcely a text in the Holy Scriptures to which there is not an opposite text, written in characters equally large and legible; and there has usually been a sword laid upon each. Even the weakest disputant is made so conceited by what he calls religion, as to think himself wiser than the wisest who thinks differently from him; and he becomes so ferocious by what he calls holding it fast, that he appears to me as if he held it fast much in the same manner as a terrier holds a rat, and you have about as much trouble in getting it from between his incisors. When at last it does come out, it is mangled, distorted, and extinct.

Calvin. M. Melancthon! you have taken a very perverse view of the subject. Such language as yours would extinguish that zeal which is to enlighten the nations, and to consume the tares by which they are overrun.

Melancthon. The tares and the corn are so intermingled throughout the wide plain which our God hath given us to cultivate, that I would rather turn the patient and humble into it to weed it carefully, than a thresher who would thresh wheat and tare together before the grain is ripened, or who would carry fire into the furrows when it is.

Calvin. Yet even the most gentle, and of the gentler sex, are inflamed with a holy zeal in the propagation of the faith.

Melancthon. I do not censure them for their earnestness in maintaining truth. We not only owe our birth to them, but also the better part of our education; and if we were not divided after their first lesson, we should continue to live in a widening circle of brothers and sisters all our lives. After our infancy and removal from home, the use of the rod is the principal thing we learn of our alien preceptors; and, catching their dictatorial language, we soon begin to exercise their instrument of enforcing it, and swing it right and left, even after we are paralysed by age, and until Death's hand strikes it out of ours. I am sorry you have cited the gentler part of the creation to appear before you, obliged as I am to bear witness that I myself have known a few specimens of the fair sex become a shade less fair, among the perplexities of religion. Indeed I am credibly informed that certain of them have lost their patience, running up and down in the dust where many roads diverge. This surely is not walking humbly with their God, nor walking with him at all; for

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those who walk with him are always readier to hear *His* voice than their own, and to admit that it is more persuasive. But at last the zealot is so infatuated, by the serious mockeries he imitates and repeats, that he really takes his own voice for God's. Is it not wonderful that the words of eternal life should have hitherto produced only eternal litigation; and that, in our progress heavenward, we should think it expedient to plant unthrifty thorns over bitter wells of blood in the wilderness we leave behind us?

Calvin. It appears to me that you are inclined to tolerate even the rank idolatry of our persecutors. Shame! shame!

Melancthon. Greater shame if I tolerated it within my own dark heart, and waved before it the foul incense of self-love.

Calvin. I do not understand you. What I do understand is this, and deny it at your peril . . I mean at the peril of your salvation . . that God is a jealous God: he himself declares it.

Melancthon. We are in the habit of considering the God of Nature as a jealous God, and idolatry as an enormous evil; an evil which is about to come back into the world, and to subdue or seduce once more our strongest and most sublime affections. Why do you lift up your eyes and hands?

Calvin. An evil *about* to come back! *about* to come! Do we not find it in high places?

Melancthon. We do indeed, and always shall, while there are any high places upon earth. Thither will men creep, and there fall prostrate.

Calvin. Against idolatry we still implore the Almighty that he will incline our hearts to keep his law.

Melancthon. The Jewish law; the Jewish idolatry. You fear the approach of this, and do not suspect the presence of a worse.

Calvin. A worse than that which the living God hath denounced?

Melancthon. Even so.

Calvin. Would it not offend, would it not wound to the quick, a mere human creature, to be likened to a piece of metal or stone, a calf or monkey?

Melancthon. A mere human creature might be angry; because his influence among his neighbours arises in great measure from the light in which he appears to them; and this light does not emanate from himself, but may be thrown on him by any hand that is expert at mischief: beside, the likeness of such animals to him could never be

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suggested by reverence or esteem, nor be regarded as a type of any virtue. The mere human creature, such as human creatures for the most-part are, would be angry; because he has nothing which he can oppose to ridicule but resentment.

Calvin. I am in consternation at your lukewarmness. If you treat idolaters thus lightly, what hope can I entertain of discussing with you the doctrine of grace and predestination.

Melancthon. Entertain no such hope at all. Wherever I find in the Holy Scriptures a disputable doctrine, I interpret it as judges do, in favour of the culprit: such is man: the benevolent judge is God. But in regard to idolatry, I see more criminals who are guilty of it than you do. I go beyond the stone-quarry and the pasture, beyond the graven image and the ox-stall. If we bow before the distant image of good, while there exists within our reach one solitary object of substantial sorrow, which sorrow our efforts can remove, we are guilty (I pronounce it) of idolatry: we prefer the intangible effigy to the living form. Surely we neglect the service of our Maker if we neglect his children. He left us in the chamber with them, to take care of them, to feed them, to admonish them, and occasionally to amuse them: instead of which, after a warning not to run into the fire, we slam the door behind us in their faces, and run eagerly downstairs to dispute and quarrel with our fellows of the household who are about their business. The wickedness of idolatry does not consist in any inadequate representation of the Deity, for whether our hands or our hearts represent him, the representation is almost alike inadequate. Every man does what he hopes and believes will be most pleasing to his God; and God, in his wisdom and mercy, will not punish gratitude in its error.

Calvin. How do you know that?

Melancthon. Because I know his loving-kindness, and experience it daily.

Calvin. If men blindly and wilfully run into error when God hath shown the right way, he will visit it on their souls.

Melancthon. He will observe from the serenity of heaven, a serenity emanating from his presence, that there is scarcely any work of his creation on earth which hath not excited, in some people or other a remembrance, an admiration, a symbol, of his power. The evil of idolatry is this. Rival nations have raised up rival deities: war hath been denounced in the name of Heaven: men have been

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murdered for the love of God: and such impiety hath darkened all the regions of the world, that the Lord of all things hath been invoked by all simultaneously as the Lord of Hosts. This is the only invocation in which men of every creed are united: an invocation to which Satan, bent on the perdition of the human race, might have listened from the fallen angels.

Calvin. We can not hope to purify men's hearts until we lead them away from the abomination of Babylon: nor will they be led away from it until we reduce the images to dust. So long as they stand, the eye will hanker after them, and the spirit be corrupt.

Melancthon. And long afterward, I sadly fear.

We attribute to the weakest of men the appellations and powers of Deity: we fall down before them: we call the impious and cruel by the title of *gracious* and *most religious:* and, even in the house of God himself, and before his very altar, we split his Divine Majesty asunder, and offer the largest part to the most corrupt and most corrupting of his creatures.

Calvin. Not *we*, M. Melancthon. I will preach, I will exist, in no land of such abomination.

Melancthon. So far, well: but religion demands more. Our reformers knock off the head from Jupiter: thunderbolt and sceptre stand. The attractive, the impressive, the august, they would annihilate, leaving men nothing but their sordid fears of vindictive punishment, and their impious doubts of our Saviour's promises.

Calvin. We should teach men to retain for ever the fear of God before their eyes, never to cease from the apprehension of his wrath, to be well aware that He often afflicts when He is farthest from wrath, and that such infliction is a benefit bestowed by Him.

Melancthon. What! if only a few are to be saved when the infliction is over?

Calvin. It becometh not us to repine at the number of vessels which the supremely wise Artificer forms, breaks, and casts away, or at the paucity it pleaseth him to preserve. The ways of Providence are inscrutable.

Melancthon. Some of them are, and some of them are not; and in these it seems to be his design that we should see and adore his wisdom. We fancy that all our inflictions are sent us directly and immediately from above: sometimes we think it in piety and contrition, but oftener in moroseness and discontent. It would, however,

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be well if we attempted to trace the causes of them. We should probably find their origin in some region of the heart which we never had well explored, or in which we had secretly deposited our worst indulgences. The clouds that intercept the heavens from us, come not from the heavens, but from the earth.

Why should we scribble our own devices over the Book of God, erasing the plainest words, and rendering the Holy Scriptures a worthless palimpsest? Can not we agree to show the nations of the world that the whole of Christianity is practicable, although the better parts never have been practised, no, not even by the priesthood, in any single one of them. Bishops, confessors, saints, martyrs, have never denounced to king or people, nor ever have attempted to delay or mitigate, the most accursed of crimes, the crime of Cain, the crime indeed whereof Cain's was only a germ, the crime of fratricide, war, war, devastating, depopulating, soul-slaughtering, heaven-defying war. Alas! the gentle call of mercy sounds feebly, and soon dies away, leaving no trace on the memory: but the swelling cries of vengeance, in which we believe we imitate the voice of Heaven, run and reverberate in loud peals and multiplied echoes along the whole vault of the brain. All the man is shaken by them; and he shakes all the earth.

Calvin! I beseech you, do you who guide and govern so many, do you (whatever others may) spare your brethren. Doubtful as I am of lighter texts, blown backward and forward at the opening of opposite windows, I am convinced and certain of one grand immovable verity. It sounds strange; it sounds contradictory.

Calvin. I am curious to hear it.

Melancthon. You shall. This is the tenet. There is nothing on earth divine beside humanity.

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XXIII. GALILEO, MILTON, AND A DOMINICAN.

Milton. Friend! let me pass.

Dominican. Whither? To whom?

Milton. Into the prison; to Galileo Galilei.

Dominican. Prison! we have no prison.

Milton. No prison here! What sayest thou?

Dominican. Son! For heretical pravity indeed, and some other less atrocious crimes, we have a seclusion, a confinement, a penitentiary: we have a locality for softening the obdurate, and furnishing them copiously with reflection and recollection: but prison we have none.

Milton. Open!

Dominican (*to himself*). What sweetness! what authority! what a form! what an attitude! what a voice!

Milton. Open! delay me no longer.

Dominican. In whose name?

Milton. In the name of humanity and of God.

Dominican. My sight staggers: the walls shake: he must be . . . . Do angels ever come hither?

Milton. Be reverent, and stand apart. [*To Galileo.*] Pardon me, sir, an intrusion.

Galileo. Young man! if I may judge by your voice and manner, you are little apt to ask pardon or to want it. I am as happy at hearing you as you seem unhappy at seeing me. I perceive at once that you are an Englishman.

Milton. I am.

Galileo. Speak then freely; and I will speak freely too. In no

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other man's presence, for these many years, indeed from my very childhood, have I done it.

Milton. Sad fate for any man! most sad for one like you! the follower of Truth, the companion of Reason in her wanderings on earth!

Galileo. We live among priests and princes and empoisoners. Your dog, by his growling, seems to be taking up the quarrel against them.

Milton. We think and feel alike in many things. I have observed that the horses and dogs of every country, bear a resemblance in character to the men. We English have a wonderful variety of both creatures. To begin with the horses: some are remarkable for strength, others for spirit; while in France there is little diversity of race; all are noisy and windy, skittish and mordacious, prancing and libidinous, fit only for a rope, and fond only of a riband. Where the riband is not to be had, the jowl of a badger will do: anything but what is native to the creature is a decoration. In Flanders you find them slow and safe, tractable and substantial. In Italy there are few good for work, none for battle; many for light carriages, for standing at doors, and for every kind of street-work.

Galileo. Do let us get among the dogs.

Milton. In France they are finely combed and pert and pettish; ready to bite if hurt, and to fondle if caressed; without fear, without animosity, without affection. In Italy they creep and shiver and rub their skins against you, and insinuate their slender beaks into the patronage of your hand, and lick it, and look up modestly, and whine decorously, and supplicate with grace. The moment you give them anything, they grow importunate; and the moment you refuse them, they bite. In Spain and England the races are similar; so indeed are those of the men. Spaniards are Englishmen in an ungrafted state, however with this great difference, that the English have ever been the least cruel of nations, excepting the Swedes; and the Spaniards the most cruel, excepting the French. Then they were, under one and the same religion, the most sanguinary and sordid of all the institutions that ever pressed upon mankind.

Galileo. To the dogs, to the dogs again, be they of what breed they may.

Milton. The worst of them could never have driven you up into this corner, merely because he had been dreaming, and you had disturbed his dream. How long shall this endure?

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Galileo. I sometimes ask God how long I should repine, and almost despair, in putting the question to myself or another.

Milton. Be strong in Him, through reason, his great gift.

Galileo. I fail not, and shall not fail. I can fancy that the heaviest link in my heavy chain has dropped off me since you entered.

Milton. Let me then praise our God for it! Not those alone are criminal who placed you here, but those no less who left unto them the power of doing it. If the learned and intelligent in all the regions of Europe would unite their learning and intellect, and would exert their energy in disseminating the truth throughout the countries they inhabit, soon must the ignorant and oppressive, now at the summit of power, resign their offices; and the most versatile nations, after this purifying and perfect revolution, rest for ages. But, bursting from their collegiate kennels, they range and hunt only for their masters; and are content at last to rear up and catch the offal thrown among them negligently, and often too with scourges on their cringing spines, as they scramble for it. Do they run through mire and thorns, do they sweat from their tongues' ends, do they breathe out blood, for this? The Dominican is looking in; not to interrupt us, I hope, for my idle exclamation.

Galileo. Continue to speak generously, rationally, and in Latin, and he will not understand one sentence. The fellow is the most stupid, the most superstitious, the most hard-hearted, and the most libidinous, in the confraternity. He is usually at my door, that he may not be at others', where he would be more in the way of his superiors. You Englishmen are inclined to melancholy; but what makes you so very grave? so much graver than before?

Milton. I hardly know which is most afflicting; to hear the loudest expression of intolerable anguish from the weak who are sinking under it, or to witness an aged and venerable man bearing up against his sufferings with unshaken constancy. And, alas! that blindness should consummate your sufferings!

Galileo. There are worse evils than blindness, and the best men suffer most by them. The spirit of liberty, now rising up in your country, will excite a blind enthusiasm, and leave behind a bitter disappointment. Vicious men will grow popular, and the interests of the nation will be intrusted to them, because they descend from their station, in order, as they say, to serve you.

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Milton. Profligate impostors! We know there are such among us; but truth shall prevail against them.

Galileo. In argument, truth always prevails finally; in politics, falsehood always; else would never states fall into decay. Even good men, if indeed good men will ever mix with evil ones for any purpose, take up the trade of politics, at first intending to deal honestly; the calm bower of the conscience is soon converted into the booth of inebriating popularity; the shouts of the multitude then grow unexciting, then indifferent, then troublesome; lastly, the riotous supporters of the condescendent falling half-asleep, he looks agape in their faces, springs upon his legs again, flings the door behind him, and escapes in the livery of Power. When Satan would have led our Saviour into temptation, he did not conduct him where the looser passions were wandering; he did not conduct him amid flowers and herbage, where a fall would have only been a soilure to our frail human nature; no, he led him up to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him palaces and towers and treasuries, knowing that it was by those alone that he himself could have been so utterly lost to rectitude and beatitude. Our Saviour spurned the temptation, and the greatest of his miracles was accomplished. After which, even the father of lies never ventured to dispute His divine nature.

Dominican. I must not suffer you to argue on theology; you may pervert the young man.

Milton. In addition to confinement, must this fungus of vapid folly stain your cell? If so, let me hope you have received the assurance that the term of your imprisonment will be short.

Galileo. It may be, or not, as God wills: it is for life.

Milton. For life!

Galileo. Even so. I regret that I can not go forth; and my depression is far below regret when I think that, if ever I should be able to make a discovery, the world is never to derive the benefit. I love the fields, and the country air, and the sunny sky, and the starry; and I could keep my temper when, in the midst of my calculations, the girls brought me flowers from lonely places, and asked me their names, and puzzled me. But now I fear lest a compulsory solitude should have rendered me a little moroser. And yet methinks I could bear again a stalk to be thrown in my face, as a deceiver, for calling the blossom that had been on it Andromeda; and

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could pardon as easily as ever a slap on the shoulder for my Ursa Major. Pleasant Arcetri!

Milton. I often walk along its quiet lanes, somewhat too full of the white eglantine in the narrower parts of them. They are so long and pliant, a little wind is enough to blow them in the face; and they scratch as much as their betters.

Galileo. Pleasant Arcetri!

Milton. The sigh that rises at the thought of a friend may be almost as genial as his voice. 'Tis a breath that seems rather to come from him than from ourselves.

Galileo. I sighed not at any thought of friendship. How do I know that any friend is left me? I was thinking that, in those unfrequented lanes, the birds that were frightened could fly away. Pleasant Arcetri! Well: we (I mean those who are not blind) can see the stars from all places; we may know that there are other worlds, and we may hope that there are happier. So then you often walk to that village?

Milton. Oftener to Fiesole.

Galileo. You like Fiesole better?

Milton. Must I confess it? For a walk, I do.

Galileo. So did I, so did I. What friends we are already! I made some observations from Fiesole.

Milton. I shall remember it on my return, and shall revisit the scenery with fresh delight. Alas! is this a promise I can keep, when I must think of you here?

Galileo. My good compassionate young man! I am concerned that my apartment allows you so little space to walk about.

Milton. Could ever I have been guilty of such disrespect! O sir, far remote, far beyond all others, is that sentiment from my heart! It swelled, and put every sinew of every limb into motion, at your indignity. No, no! Suffer me still to bend in reverence and humility on this hand, now stricken with years and with captivity! . . on this hand, which Science has followed, which God himself has guided, and before which all the worlds above us, in all their magnitudes and distances, have been thrown open.

Galileo. Ah my too friendly enthusiast! may yours do more, and with impunity.

Milton. At least, be it instrumental in removing from the earth a few of her heaviest curses; a few of her oldest and worst impedi-

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ments to liberty and wisdom . . mitres, tiaras, crowns, and the trumpery whereon they rest. I know but two genera of men, the annual and the perennial. Those who die down, and leave behind them no indication of the places whereon they grow, are cognate with the gross matter about them; those on the contrary who, ages after their departure, are able to sustain the lowliest, and to exalt the highest, those are surely the spirits of God, both when upon earth and when with Him. What do I see, in letting fall the sleeve! The scars and lacerations on your arms show me that you have fought for your country.

Galileo. I can not claim that honour. Do not look at them. My guardian may understand that.

Milton. Great God! they are the marks of the torture!

Galileo. My guardian may understand that likewise. Let us converse about something else.

Milton. Italy! Italy! Italy! drive thy poets into exile, into prison, into madness! spare, spare thy one philosopher! What track can the mind pursue, in her elevations or her plains or her recesses, without the dogging and prowling of the priesthood?

Galileo. They have not done with me yet. A few days ago they informed me that I was accused or suspected of disbelieving the existence of devils. When I protested that in my opinion there are almost as many devils as there are men, and that every wise man is the creator of hundreds at his first appearance, they told me with much austerity and scornfulness of rebuke, that this opinion is as heretical as the other; and that we have no authority from Scripture for believing that the complement exceeded some few legions, several of which were thinned and broken by beating up their quarters: thanks chiefly to the Dominicans. I bowed, as became me: for these our worthy masters, and their superiors, the successors of Peter, would burn us for teaching anything untaught before.

Milton. They would burn you then for resembling the great apostle himself?

Galileo. In what but denying the truth and wearing chains?

Milton. Educated with such examples before them, literary societies are scarcely more tolerant to the luminaries of imagination than theological societies are to the luminaries of science. I myself indeed should hesitate to place Tasso on an equality, or nearly on an

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equality, with Ariosto; yet, since his pen hath been excelled on the Continent by only two in sixteen centuries, he might have expected more favour, more forbearance, than he found. I was shocked at the impudence of his critics in this country: their ignorance less surprised me.*

Galileo. Of yours I am unable to speak.

Milton. So much the better.

Galileo. Instead of it, you will allow me to express my admiration of what (if I understand anything) I understand. No nation has produced any man, except Aristoteles, comparable to either of the Bacons. The elder was the more wonderful: the later in season was the riper and the greater. Neither of them told all he knew, or half he thought; and each was alike prodigal in giving, and prudent in withholding. The learning and genius of Francis led him onward to many things which his nobility and stateliness disallowed. Hence was he like the leisurely and rich agriculturist, who goeth out a-field after dinner, well knowing where lie the nests and covies; and in such idle hour throweth his hat partly over them, and they clutter and run and rise and escape from him without his heed, to make a louder whirr thereafter, and a longer flight elsewhere.

Milton. I believe I have discovered no few inaccuracies in his reasoning, voluntary or involuntary. But I apprehend he committed them designedly, and that he wanted in wisdom but the highest . . . the wisdom of honesty. It is comfortable to escape from him, and return again to Sorrento and Tasso. He should have been hailed as the worthy successor, not scrutinised as the presumptuous rival, of the happy Ferrarese. He was ingenious, he was gentle, he was brave: and what was the reward? Did cities contend for his residence within them? did princes throw open their palaces at his

* Criticism is still very low in Italy. Tiraboschi has done little for it: nothing can be less exact than his judgments on the poets. There is not one remarkable sentence, or one happy expression, in all his volumes. The same may be said of Abbate Cesarotti, and of the Signor Calsabigi, who wrote on Alfieri. There is scarcely a glimpse of poetry in Alfieri, yet his verses are tight-braced, and his strokes are animating: not indeed to the Signor Calsabigi. The Italians are grown more generous to their literary men in proportion as they are grown poorer in them. Italy is the only great division of Europe where there never hath existed a Review bearing some authority or credit. These things do not greatly serve literature, but they rise from it, and show it.

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approach? did academies send deputations to invite and solicit his attendance? did senators cast branches of laurel under his horse's hoofs? did prelates and princes hang tapestries from their windows, meet him at the gates, and conduct him in triumph to the Capitol? Instead of it, his genius was derided, his friendship scorned, his love rejected; he lived despairingly, he died broken-hearted.

Galileo. My friend! my friend! you yourself in your language are almost a poet.

Milton. I may be in time to come.

Galileo. What! with such an example before your eyes? Rather be a philosopher: you may be derided in this too, but you will not be broken-hearted. I am ashamed when I reflect that the worst enemies of Torquato, pushing him rudely against Ariosto, are to be found in Florence.

Milton. Be the difference what it may between them, your academicians ought to be aware that the lowest of the animals are nearer to the highest of them, than these highest are to the lowest of those two. For in what greatly more do they benefit the world than the animals do, or how much longer remain in the memory of their species?

Galileo. Little, very little; and the same thing may be easily proved of those whom they praise and venerate. My knowledge of poetry is narrow; and, having little enthusiasm, I discover faults where beauties escape me. I never would venture to say before our Italians what I will confess to you. In reading the *Gerusalemme Liberata* I remarked, that among the epithets the poet is fondest of *grande:* I had remarked that Virgil is fondest of *altus.* Now we can not make anything greater or higher by clapping these words upon it: where the substructure is not sufficiently broad and solid, they will not stick. The first verses in the *Gerusalemme* for instance, are

> "Canto le arme pietose e 'l capitano
> Che il *gran* sepolcro liberò di Cristo."

Surely the poet would rather have had a great captain than a great cenotaph.

Milton. He might have written, with a modester and less sonorous exordium,

> Canto le arme pietose e 'l capitano,
> *Lui che il* sepolcro liberò di Cristo.

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Galileo. It would not have done for our people, either the unlearned or learned. They must have *high, gigantic, immense;* they must have ebony, gold, azure; they must have honey, sugar, cinnamon, as regularly in their places as blue-lettered jars, full or empty, are found in apothecaries' shops. Dante and Ariosto, different as they are, equally avoided these sweet viscidities. I wish you would help me to exonerate Tasso from the puffy piece of impediment at the beginning of his march.

Milton. Let us imagine that he considered all Jerusalem as the sepulchre of Christ.

Galileo. No friend or countryman hath said it for him. We will accept it, and go on. Our best histories, excepting Giovio's and Davila's, contain no picture, no character, no passion, no eloquence; and Giovio's is partial and faithless. Criticism is more verbose and less logical here than among the French, the Germans, and the Dutch.

Milton. Let us return to Ariosto and Tasso, who, whatever the academicians may gabble in their assemblies, have delighted the most cultivated minds, and will delight them for incalculable ages.

Galileo. An academician, a dunghill-cock, and a worm, do indeed form a triangle more nearly equilateral than an Academician, a Lodovico, and a Torquato. The Dominican is listening yet. Behold, he comes in!

Dominican. Young gentleman, I did not suspect, when you entered, that you would ever talk about authors whose writings are prohibited. Ariosto is obscene. I have heard the same of Tasso, in some part or other.

Milton. Prythee, begone!

Dominican. We retire together.

Galileo. It would be better to leave me, if he urges it, otherwise I may never expect again the pleasure I have received to-day.

Dominican. Signor Galileo, do you talk of pleasure to young persons? Most illustrious signorino, the orders of my superior are to reconduct you.

Milton. Adieu then, O too great man!

Galileo. For to-day adieu!

Dominican (*out of the door*). In my lowly cell, O signorino (if your excellency in her inborn gentleness could condescend to favour

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her humblest slave with her most desired presence) are prepared some light refreshments.

Milton. Swallow them, swallow them; thou seemest thirsty: I enter but one cell here.

Dominican (*aside, having bowed respectfully*). Devil! heretic! never shalt thou more!

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XXIV. ESSEX AND SPENSER.

Essex. Instantly on hearing of thy arrival from Ireland, I sent a message to thee, good Edmund, that I might learn from one so judicious and dispassionate as thou art, the real state of things in that distracted country; it having pleased the queen's majesty to think of appointing me her deputy, in order to bring the rebellious to submission.

Spenser. Wisely and well considered; but more worthily of her judgment than her affection. May your lordship overcome, as you have ever done, the difficulties and dangers you foresee.

Essex. We grow weak by striking at random; and knowing that I must strike, and strike heavily, I would fain see exactly where the stroke shall fall.

Some attribute to the Irish all sorts of excesses; others tell us that these are old stories; that there is not a more inoffensive race of merry creatures under heaven, and that their crimes are all hatched for them here in England, by the incubation of printers' boys, and are brought to market at times of distressing dearth in news. From all that I myself have seen of them, I can only say that the civilised (I mean the richer and titled) are as susceptible of heat as iron, and as impenetrable to light as granite. The half-barbarous are probably worse; the utterly barbarous may be somewhat better. Like game-cocks, they must spur when they meet. One fights because he fights an Englishman; another because the fellow he quarrels with comes from a distant county; a third because the next parish is an eyesore to him, and his fist-mate is from it. The only thing in which they all agree as proper law is the tooth-for-tooth act. Luckily we have a bishop who is a native, and we called him before the queen. He

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represented to her majesty, that everything in Old Ireland tended to re-produce its kind; crimes among others; and he declared frankly, that if an honest man is murdered, or what is dearer to an honest man, if his honour is wounded in the person of his wife, it must be expected that he will retaliate. Her majesty delivered it as her opinion, that the latter case of vindictiveness was more likely to take effect than the former. But the bishop replied, that in his conscience he could not answer for either if the man was up. The dean of the same diocese gave us a more favourable report. Being a justice of the peace, he averred most solemnly that no man ever had complained to him of murder, excepting one who had lost so many foreteeth by a cudgel that his deposition could not be taken exactly; added to which, his head was a little clouded with drunkenness; furthermore, that extremely few women had adduced sufficiently clear proofs of violence, excepting those who were wilful, and resisted with tooth and nail. In all which cases it was difficult, nay impossible, to ascertain which violence began first and lasted longest.

There is not a nation upon earth that pretends to be so superlatively generous and high-minded; and there is not one (I speak from experience) so utterly base and venal. I have positive proof that the nobility, in a mass, are agreed to sell, for a stipulated sum, all their rights and privileges, so much per man; and the queen is inclined thereunto. But would our parliament consent to pay money for a cargo of rotten pilchards? And would not our captains be readier to swamp than to import them? The noisiest rogues in that kingdom, if not quieted by a halter, may be quieted by making them brief-collectors, and by allowing them first to encourage the incendiary, then to denounce and hang him, and lastly to collect all the money they can, running up and down with the whining ferocity of half-starved hyænas, under pretence of repairing the damages their exhausted country hath sustained. Others ask modestly a few thousands a year, and no more, from those whom they represent to us as naked and famished; and prove clearly to every dispassionate man who hath a single drop of free blood in his veins, that at least this pittance is due to them for abandoning their liberal and lucrative professions, and for endangering their valuable lives on the tempestuous seas, in order that the voice of Truth may sound for once upon the shores of England, and Humanity cast her shadow on the council-chamber.

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I gave a dinner to a party of these fellows a few weeks ago. I know not how many kings and princes were among them, nor how many poets and prophets and legislators and sages. When they were half-drunk, they coaxed and threatened; when they had gone somewhat deeper, they joked; and croaked, and hiccupped, and wept over sweet Ireland; and when they could neither stand nor sit any longer, they fell upon their knees and their noddles, and swore that limbs, life, liberty, Ireland, and God himself, were all at the queen's service. It was only their holy religion, the religion of their forefathers . . . here sobs interrupted some, howls others, execrations more, and the liquor they had ingulfed the rest. I looked down on them with stupor and astonishment, seeing faces, forms, dresses, much like ours, and recollecting their ignorance, levity, and ferocity. My pages drew them gently by the heels down the steps; my grooms set them upright (inasmuch as might be) on their horses; and the people in the streets, shouting and pelting, sent forward the beasts to their straw.

Various plans have been laid before us for civilising or coercing them. Among the pacific, it was proposed to make an offer to five hundred of the richer Jews in the Hanse-towns and in Poland, who should be raised to the dignity of the Irish peerage, and endowed with four thousand acres of good forfeited land, on condition of each paying two thousand pounds, and of keeping up ten horsemen and twenty foot, Germans or Poles, in readiness for service.

The Catholics bear nowhere such ill-will toward Jews as toward Protestants. Brooks make even worse neighbours than oceans do.

I myself saw no objection to the measure: but our gracious queen declared she had an insuperable one; *they stank!* We all acknowledged the strength of the argument, and took out our handkerchiefs. Lord Burleigh almost fainted; and Raleigh wondered how the Emperor Titus could bring up his men against Jerusalem.

"Ah!" said he, looking reverentially at her majesty, "the star of Berenice shone above him! and what evil influence could that star not quell! what malignancy could it not annihilate!"

Hereupon he touched the earth with his brow until the queen said,

"Sir Walter! lift me up those laurels."

At which manifestation of princely good-will he was advancing to kiss her Majesty's hand, but she waved it, and said sharply,

"Stand there, dog!"

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Now what tale have you for us?

Spenser. Interrogate me, my lord, that I may answer each question distinctly, my mind being in sad confusion at what I have seen and undergone.

Essex. Give me thy account and opinion of these very affairs as thou leftest them; for I would rather know one part well, than all imperfectly; and the violences of which I have heard within the day surpass belief.

Why weepest thou, my gentle Spenser? Have the rebels sacked thy house?

Spenser. They have plundered and utterly destroyed it.

Essex. I grieve for thee, and will see thee righted.

Spenser. In this they have little harmed me.

Essex. How! I have heard it reported that thy grounds are fertile, and thy mansion * large and pleasant.

Spenser. If river and lake and meadow-ground and mountain could render any place the abode of pleasantness, pleasant was mine, indeed!

On the lovely banks of Mulla I found deep contentment. Under the dark alders did I muse and meditate. Innocent hopes were my gravest cares, and my playfullest fancy was with kindly wishes. Ah! surely of all cruelties the worst is to extinguish our kindness. Mine is gone: I love the people and the land no longer. My lord, ask me not about them; I may speak injuriously.

Essex. Think rather then of thy happier hours and busier occupations; these likewise may instruct me.

Spenser. The first seeds I sowed in the garden, ere the old castle was made habitable for my lovely bride, were acorns from Penshurst. I planted a little oak before my mansion at the birth of each child. My sons, I said to myself, shall often play in the shade of them when I am gone, and every year shall they take the measure of their growth, as fondly as I take theirs.

Essex. Well, well; but let not this thought make thee weep so bitterly.

Spenser. Poison may ooze from beautiful plants; deadly grief from dearest reminiscences.

I *must* grieve, I *must* weep: it seems the law of God, and the only

* It was purchased by a victualler and banker, the father or grandfather of Lord Riversdale.

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one that men are not disposed to contravene. In the performance of this alone do they effectually aid one another.

Essex. Spenser! I wish I had at hand any arguments or persuasions, of force sufficient to remove thy sorrow: but really I am not in the habit of seeing men grieve at anything, except the loss of favour at court, or of a hawk, or of a buck-hound. And were I to swear out my condolences to a man of thy discernment, in the same round roll-call phrases we employ with one another upon these occasions, I should be guilty, not of insincerity but of insolence. True grief hath ever something sacred in it; and when it visiteth a wise man and a brave one, is most holy.

Nay, kiss not my hand: he whom God smiteth hath God with him. In his presence what am I?

Spenser. Never so great, my lord, as at this hour, when you see aright who is greater. May He guide your counsels, and preserve your life and glory!

Essex. Where are thy friends? Are they with thee?

Spenser. Ah, where, indeed! Generous, true-hearted Philip! where art thou? whose presence was unto me peace and safety; whose smile was contentment, and whose praise renown. My lord! I can not but think of him among still heavier losses: he was my earliest friend, and would have taught me wisdom.

Essex. Pastoral poetry, my dear Spenser, doth not require tears and lamentations. Dry thine eyes; rebuild thine house: the queen and council, I venture to promise thee, will make ample amends for every evil thou hast sustained. What! does that enforce thee to wail yet louder?

Spenser. Pardon me, bear with me, most noble heart! I have lost what no council, no queen, no Essex, can restore.

Essex. We will see that. There are other swords, and other arms to wield them, beside a Leicester's and a Raleigh's. Others can crush their enemies and serve their friends.

Spenser. O my sweet child! And of many so powerful, many so wise and so beneficent, was there none to save thee? None! none!

Essex. I now perceive that thou lamentest what almost every father is destined to lament. Happiness must be bought, although the payment may be delayed. Consider; the same calamity might have befallen thee here in London. Neither the houses of ambassadors, nor the palaces of kings, nor the altars of God him-

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self, are asylums against death. How do I know but under this very roof there may sleep some latent calamity, that in an instant shall cover with gloom every inmate of the house, and every far dependant?

Spenser. God avert it!

Essex. Every day, every hour of the year, do hundreds mourn what thou mournest.

Spenser. Oh, no, no, no! Calamities there are around us; calamities there are all over the earth; calamities there are in all seasons; but none in any season, none in any place, like mine.

Essex. So say all fathers, so say all husbands. Look at any old mansion-house, and let the sun shine as gloriously as it may on the golden vanes, or the arms recently quartered over the gateway, or the embayed window, and on the happy pair that haply is toying at it; nevertheless, thou mayest say that of a certainty the same fabric hath seen much sorrow within its chambers, and heard many wailings: and each time this was the heaviest stroke of all. Funerals have passed along through the stout-hearted knights upon the wainscot, and amid the laughing nymphs upon the arras. Old servants have shaken their heads, as if somebody had deceived them, when they found that beauty and nobility could perish.

Edmund! the things that are too true pass by us as if they were not true at all; and when they have singled us out, then only do they strike us. Thou and I must go too. Perhaps the next year may blow us away with its fallen leaves.*

Spenser. For you, my lord, many years (I trust) are waiting: I never shall see those fallen leaves. No leaf, no bud, will spring upon the earth before I sink into her breast for ever.

Essex. Thou, who art wiser than most men, shouldst bear with patience, equanimity, and courage, what is common to all.

Spenser. Enough! enough! enough! Have all men seen their infant burned to ashes before their eyes?

Essex. Gracious God! Merciful Father! what is this?

Spenser. Burned alive! burned to ashes! burned to ashes! The flames dart their serpent tongues through the nursery-window. I can not quit thee, my Elizabeth! I can not lay down our Edmund. Oh these flames! they persecute, they enthrall me, they curl round

* It happened so.

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my temples, they hiss upon my brain, they taunt me with their fierce foul voices, they carp at me, they wither me, they consume me, throwing back to me a little of life, to roll and suffer in, with their fangs upon me. Ask me, my lord, the things you wish to know from me; I may answer them; I am now composed again. Command me, my gracious lord! I would yet serve you; soon I shall be unable. You have stooped to raise me up; you have borne with me; you have pitied me, even like one not powerful; you have brought comfort, and will leave it with me; for gratitude is comfort.

Oh! my memory stands all a tip-toe on one burning point: when it drops from it, then it perishes. Spare me: ask me nothing; let me weep before you in peace; the kindest act of greatness.

Essex. I should rather have dared to mount into the midst of the conflagration than I now dare entreat thee not to weep. The tears that overflow thy heart, my Spenser, will staunch and heal it in their sacred stream, but not without hope in God.

Spenser. My hope in God is that I may soon see again what he has taken from me. Amid the myriads of angels there is not one so beautiful: and even he (if there be any) who is appointed my guardian, could never love me so. Ah! these are idle thoughts, vain wanderings, distempered dreams. If there ever were guardian angels, he who so wanted one, my helpless boy, would not have left these arms upon my knees.

Essex. God help and sustain thee, too gentle Spenser! I never will desert thee. But what am I? Great they have called me! Alas, how powerless then and infantile is greatness in the presence of calamity!

Come, give me thy hand: let us walk up and down the gallery. Bravely done! I will envy no more a Sidney or a Raleigh.

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XXV. ARCHDEACON HARE AND WALTER LANDOR.

Archdeacon Hare. In some of your later writings, I perceive, you have not strictly followed the line you formerly laid down for spelling.

Walter Landor. I found it inexpedient; since whatever the pains I took, there was, in every sheet almost, some deviation on the side of the compositor. Inconsistency was forced on me against all my struggles and reclamations. At last nothing is left for me but to enter my protest, and to take the smooth path instead of the broken-up highway.

Archdeacon Hare. It is chiefly in the preterites and participles that I have followed you perseveringly. We are rich in having two for many of our verbs, and unwise in corrupting the spelling, and thereby rendering the pronunciation difficult. We pronounce "astonisht;" we write astonished or astonish'd; an unnecessary harshness. Never was spoken dropp*ed*, or lopp*ed*, or hopp*ed*, or propp*ed;* but dropt, &c.; yet with the choice before us, we invariably take the wrong. I do not resign a right to "astonish*ed*" or "diminish*ed*." They may, with many like them, be useful in poetry; and several such terminations add dignity and solemnity to what we read in our church, the sanctuary at once of our faith and of our language.

Walter Landor. In more essential things than preterites and participles I ought rather to have been your follower than you mine. No language is purer or clearer than yours. Vigorous streams from the mountain do not mingle at once with the turbid lake, but retain their force and their colour in the midst of it. We are sapt by an influx of putridity.

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Archdeacon Hare. Come, come; again to our spelling-book.

Walter Landor. Well then, we differ on the spelling of *honour*, *favour*, &c. You would retain the u: I would eject it, for the sake of consistency. We have dropt it in *author*, *emperor*, *ambassador*. Here again, for consistency and compliancy, I write "embassador," because I write, as all do, "embassy." I write theat*er*, sepulch*er*, met*er*, in their english form rather than the french. The best authors have done it; all write "hexamet*er*" and "pentamet*er*."

Archdeacon Hare. It is well to simplify and systematize wherever we can do it conveniently.

Walter Landor. And without violence to *vested rights;* which words have here some meaning. Why "*a*mend," if "*e*mendation"? Why not "pont*if*," if "cait*if*"?

Archdeacon Hare. Why then should grand*eur* be left in solitary state? The Englishman less easily protrudes his nether jaw than the Frenchman, as "grand*eur*" seems to require. Grand*our* (or grand*or*, if you will have it so) sounds better.

Walter Landor. I *will* have it so; and so will you and others at last.

Archdeacon Hare. Meanwhile, let us untie this last knot of Norman bondage on the common-law of language in our land.

Walter Landor. Set about it: no authority is higher than yours: I will run by the side of you, or be your herald, or (what better becomes me) your pursuivant.

There is an affectation of scholarship in compilers of spelling-books, and in the authors they follow for examples, when they bring forward *phenomena* and the like. They might as well bring forward *mysteria*. We have no right to tear greek and latin declensions out of their grammars: we need no *vortices* when we have *vortexes* before us; and while we have *memorandums*, *factotums*, *ultimatums*, let our shepherd-dogs bring back to us by the ear such as have wandered from the flock.

Archdeacon Hare. We have "stimul*ant*;" why "stimul*us*?" why "stimuli?" Why "recip*e*?" why "rece*ipt*?" we might as reasonably write "dece*ipt*" and "conce*ipt*." I believe we are the only people who keep the *Dramatis Personæ* on the stage, or announce their going off by "*exeunt:*" "*exit*" for *departure*, is endurable, and kept in countenance by *transit:* let us deprecate the danger of hearing of a friend's *obit*, which seems imminent: a "*post-obit*" is bad

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enough: an *item* I would confine to the ledger. I have no mind for *animus*.

Walter Landor. Beside these there are two expressions either of which is quite enough to bring down curses and mortality on the poet. "*Stand confest*" (even if not written "confess'd") is one: "*unbidden tears*" the other. I can imagine no such nonsense as *unbidden tears*. Why do we not write the verb control with an e at the end, and the substantive with *u* as *soul?* we might as reasonably write *whol* for whole: very unreasonably do we write *wholly* with a double l; *wholy* and *soly* might follow the type of *holy*. We see printed, *befal* with one l, but never *fal*, and yet in the monosyllable we should not be doubtful of the accentuation. It is but of late that we control, recal, appal, we do not yet rol. Will any one tell me who put such a lazy boast to our *munition*-train, and spelt on the front of the carriage *am*munition? We write *enter* and *inter* equally with a single final r: surely the latter wants another.

Archdeacon Hare. What is quite as censurable, while we reject the good of our own countrymen, we adopt the bad of the forener. We are much in the habit of using the word *flibustier*. Surely we might let the French take and torture our *freebooter*. In our fondness for making verbs out of substantives, we even go to the excess of *flibustering*. And now from coarse vulgarity let us turn our eyes toward inconsiderate refinement. When I was a boy every girl among the poets was a *nymph*, whether in country or town. Johnson countenanced them, and, arm-in-arm with Pope, followed them even into Jerusalem. "Ye nymphs of Solyma, &c."

Walter Landor. Pity they ever found their way back!

Archdeacon Hare. Few even now object to Muse and Bard.

Walter Landor. Nor would I in their proper places: the Muse in Greece and Italy; the Bard on our side of the Alps, up almost as far as Scandinavia, quite as far as the Cimbrian Chersonese. But the Bard looks better at nine or ten centuries off than among gentlemen in roquelaures or paletots. Johnson, a great reprehender, might fairly and justly have reprehended him in the streets of London, whatever were his own excesses among the "Nymphs of Solyma." In the midst of his gravity he was not quite impartial, and, extraordinary as were his intellectual powers, he knew about as much of poetry as of geography. In one of his letters he talks of Guadaloupe as being in another hemisphere. Speaking of that island, his very

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words are these: "Whether you return hither or stay in another hemisphere." At the commencement of his Satire on the *Vanity of Human wishes* (a noble specimen of declamation), he places China nearer to us than Peru.

Archdeacon Hare. The negligences of Johnson may easily be forgiven, in consideration of the many benefits he has conferred on literature. A small poet, no great critic, he was a strenuous and lofty moralist. Your pursuers are of another breed, another race. They will soon tire themselves, hang out their tongues, and drop along the road. Time is not at all misapplied by you in the analysis and valuation of Southey's and Wordsworth's poetry, which never has been done scrupulously and correctly. But surely gravel may be carted and shot down on the highway without the measure of a Winchester bushel. Consider if what you have taken in hand is worthy of your workmanship.

Walter Landor. The most beautiful tapestry is workt on extremely coarse canvas. Open a volume of *Bayle's Biographical Dictionary;* and how many just and memorable observations will you find on people of no "note or likelihood."

Archdeacon Hare. Unhappily for us, we are insensible of the corruptions that creep yearly into our language. At Cambridge or Oxford (I am ignorant which of them claims the glory of the invention) some undergraduate was so facetious as to say, "Well, while you are *discussing* the question, I will *discuss* my wine." The gracefulness of this witticism was so captivating, that it took possession not only of both universities, but seized also on "men about town." Even the ladies, the vestals who preserve the purity of language, caught up the expression from those who were libertines in it.

Walter Landor. Chesterfield and Horace Walpole, who are among the most refined of our senators, have at present no more authority in language than in dress. By what we see, we might imagine that the one article is to be cast aside after as short a wear as the other. It occurs to me at this moment, that, when we have assumed the habiliments of the vulgar, we are in danger of contracting their coarseness of language and demeanour.

Archdeacon Hare. Certainly the Romans were *togati* in their tongue, as well as in their wardrobe. Purity and gravity of style were left uncontaminated and unshaken by the breath of Tiberius and

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his successor. The Antonines spoke better latin than the Triumvir Antonius; and Marcus Aurelius, altho on some occasions he preferred the greek, was studious to maintain his own idiom strong and healthy. When the tongue is paralyzed, the limbs soon follow. No nation hath long survived the decrepitude of its language.

There is perpetually an accession of slang to our vernacular, which is usually biennial or triennial.

Walter Landor. I have been either a fortunate or a prudent man to have escaped for so many years together to be "pitched into" among "*giant* trees," "*monster* meetings," "*glorious* fruit," "*splendid* cigars, dogs, horses, and *bricks*," "*palmy* days," "*rich* oddities;" to owe nobody a farthing for any other fashionable habits of rude device and demi-saison texture; and above all, to have never come in at the "*eleventh hour*," which has been sounding all day long the whole year. They do me a little injustice who say that such a good fortune is attributable to my residence in Italy. The fact is, I am too cautious and too aged to catch disorders, and I walk fearlessly through these epidemics.

Archdeacon Hare. Simply to *open* is insufficient: we "open *up*" and "open *out*." A gentleman *indues* a coat; it will be difficult to *exue* if he tries; he must lie down and sleep in it.

"*Foolery*" was thought of old sufficiently expressive: nothing short of *tom*foolery will do now. To *repudiate* was formerly to put away what disgraced us: it now signifies (in America at least) to reject the claims of justice and honour. We hear people *re-read*, and see them *re-write;* and are invited to a *spread*, where we formerly went to a dinner or collation. We cut down *barracks* to a single *barrack;* but we leave the "stocks" in good repair. We are among *ambitions*, and among *peoples*, until Sternhold and Hopkins call us into a quieter place, and we hear once again

"All people that on earth do dwell."

Shall we never have done with "*rule and exception*," "*ever and anon*," "*many a time and oft?*"

Walter Landor. It is to be regretted that Horne Tooke and Bishop Lowth were placed so far apart, by many impediments and obstructions, that they never could unite in order to preserve the finials and pinnacles of our venerable fabric, to stop the innovations and to diminish the anomalies of our language. Southey, altho in his

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youth during their time, might have assisted them; for early in life he had studied as sedulously the best of our old authors as they had, and his judgement was as mature at twenty-five as theirs at fifty. He agreed with me that *mind, find, kind, blind, behind*, should have a final *e*, in order to signify the sound, and that the verb *wind* should likewise for the same reason. I brought Fairfax's "Tasso" with me, and showed him that Fairfax had done it, and had spelt many other words better than our contemporaries, or even than the most-part of his own.

Archdeacon Hare. There are two expressions of frequent occurrence, equally wrong: "incorrect *orthography*" and "vernacular *idiom*." Distempers in language, as in body, which rise from the crowded lane, creep up sometimes to where the mansions are higher and better ventilated. I think you once remarkt to me that you would just as properly write pill*an*ger for pillager, as mess*en*ger for messager. The more excusable vulgar add to these dainties their *sausenger*. Have you found anything more to notice where you have inserted those slips of paper in your Fairfax?

Walter Landor. Much: to run over all would be tedious. He writes with perfect propriety *dismaid, applie, chefe, hart, wisht, husht, spred.* Southey was entirely of my opinion that if *lead* in the present is *led* in the preterite, *read* should be *red*. There is no danger of mistaking the adjective for the verb by it. He ridiculed the spelling of Byron *redde;* which is quite as ridiculous as the conceit of that antiquarian society which calls itself the "Roxburghe Club;" *e* was never added to *burgh*.

Howell, a very careful writer, an excellent authority, writes *forren, frend, Mahometism, toung, extemporal, shipwrack, cole, onely, sutable, plaid, askt, begger, apparance, brest, yeer, lanch, peece, tresure, scepter, incertain, kinde, perle.*

Drayton and Daniel may be associated with Howell. Drayton in his prose wrote *red*, and there is no purer or more considerate author. He writes also ransack*t*, distinguish*t*, disperse*t*, worship*t*, admonish*t*, tax*t*, deck*t*, wrack*t*, profes*t*, extol*d*, purchas*t*. He writes *fained, tuch, yeers, onely, dore.*

Sir Thomas More writes *lerned, clereness, preste* (priest), *sholde, wolde, leve, yere, harte, mynde, here* (hear), *herer* (hearer), *appere, speker, seke, grevous, fynde, doute, wherof, seme, dede, nede, tethe;* (teeth), *precher, peple, sene* (seen), *eres,* (ears), *toke, therfor, mete,*

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(meat), *frend*, *therin*, *fere* (fear), a *wever*, *rede* (read). A host of these words only show that the best authors avoided the double vowel.

Spenser, in consecutive verses, writes *were* (wear), and *bere* (bear), and *heven* and *foule*.

"Upon her thombe or in her purse to bere."

"There is no foule that flieth under heaven."

Camden writes *forraine* and *iland*.

It was late before *ea* was employed in place of the simple vowel *e*. Chaucer writes "*eny pecock*." *Shal* and *wil*, so written by him, are more proper than *shall* and *will*, by avoiding the form of substantives. Caxton writes, as many of his time, *werk* not "work." Tyndal, long after, writes *doo* for *do*. Spenser writes *dore* instead of *door*. Sackville writes *pearst*. Dryden is less accurate than Cowley, and Waller, and Sprat. Speaking of Cowley, he says "he never could forgive a conceit," meaning *forego*. In our own age many, Burke among the rest, say, "By *this* means." It would be affectation to say By this *mean*, in the singular; but the proper expression is "By these means."

Archdeacon Hare. In regard to terminations, it is difficult to account for the letter *e* when we say "by and by*e*." There is none in accounting for it in "Good *bye*," which is the most comprehensive of all contractions: it is "Good be with ye!" or "God be with ye!" which in effect is the same. Formerly *ye* was more universal than *you*. Ignorant critics reprehend it wrongly in such a position as "I would not hurt *ye*." But it is equally good english as "*Ye* would not hurt me." No word is more thoroughly vernacular, from of old to this present day, among the people throughout the land. We should keep our homely well-seasoned words, and never use the grave for light purposes.

Among the many we misapply is the word *destiny*. We hear of a man controling the destiny of another. Nothing on earth can controle the *destined*, whether the term be applied strictly or laxly. *Element* is another, meaning only a *constituent*. Graver stil is *incarnation*. We hear about the *mission* of fellows whose highest could be only to put a letter into the post-office.

We usually set ' before '*neath*: improperly: the better spelling is

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nethe, whence *nether*. We also prefix the same ' to *'fore*. We say (at least those who swear do) "*'fore* God;" never "*be*fore God." *Cause* in like manner is a word of itself, no less than "*be*cause." But this form is properer for poetry.

Chaucer writes *peple*, as we pronounce it.

Skelton writes *sault* and *mault*, also in accordance with the pronunciation, and there is exactly the same reason for it as in *fault*. It would not be going far out of our way to bring them back again, and then cry *hault*, which we do only with the pen in hand.

We are in the habitude of writing onward*s*, backward*s*, toward*s*, afterward*s*; he more gracefully drops the final *s*. We write strip*t*, whip*t*, yet hesitate at trip*t* and worship*t*. We possess in many cases two for one of the preterites, and, to show our impartiality and fairness, we pronounce the one and write the other. We write *said* and *laid*, but never *staid* or *plaid*. We write offic*i*al; why not influenc*i*al, circumstanc*i*al, differenc*i*al? We write *entrance* the substantive like *entrànce* the verb. Shakespeare wisely wrote

"That sounds the fatal entrance of Duncan." &c.

Wonderous is a finer word than *wondrous*.

It is not every-good scholar, or every fair poet, who possesses the copiousness and exhibits the discrimination of Shakespeare. Even when we take the hand he offers us, we are accused of innovating.

Walter Landor. So far from innovating, the words I propose are brought to their former and legitimate station; you have sanctioned the greater part, and have thought the remainder worth your notice. Every intelligent and unprejudiced man will agree with you. I prefer high authorities to lower, analogy to fashion, a *Restoration* to a *Usurpation*. Innovators, and worse than innovators, were those Reformers called, who disturbed the market-place of manorial Theology, and went back to Religion where she stood alone in her original purity. We English were the last people to adopt the reformed style in the kalendar, and we seem determined to be likewise the last in that of language. We are ordered to please the public; we are forbidden to instruct it. Not only publishers and booksellers are against us, but authors too; and even some of them who are not regularly in the service of those masters. The outcry is, "*We* have not ventured to alter what we find in use, and why should *he?*"

Archdeacon Hare. If the most learned and intelligent, in that age

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which has been thought by many the most glorious in our literature, were desirous that the language should be settled and fixt, how much more desirable is it that its accretion of corruptions should be now removed! It may be difficult; and stil more difficult to restore the authority of the ancient dynasty.

Walter Landor. We never have attempted it. But there are certain of their laws and usages which we would not willingly call obsolete. Often in the morning I have lookt among your books for them, and I deposit in your hands the first fruits of my research. It is only for such purposes that I sit hours together in a library. Either in the sunshine or under the shade of trees, I must think, meditate, and compose.

Archdeacon Hare. Thoughts may be born in a room above-stairs or below, but they are stronger and healthier for early exercise in the open air. It is not only the conspirator to whom is appropriate the "modo citus modo tardus incessus;" it is equally his who follows fancy, and his also who searches after truth.

Walter Landor. The treasures of your library have sometimes tempted me away from your pictures; and I have ceast for a moment to regret that by Selections and Compendiums we had lost a large portion of the most noble works, when I find so accurate a selection, so weighty a compendium, carried about with him who is now walking at my side.

Archdeacon Hare. I would have strangled such a compliment ere it had attained its full growth: however, now it is not only full-grown but over-grown, let me offer you in return not a compliment, but a congratulation, on your courage in using the plural "compendi*ums*" where another would have pronounced "compendia."

Walter Landor. Would that other, whoever he may be, have said musea? All I require of people is consistency, and rather in the right than in the wrong. When we have admitted a greek, or latin, or french word, we ought to allow it the right of citizenship, and induce it to comply and harmonize with the rest of the vocular community. "Pindari*que*" went away with Cowley, and died in the same ditch with him; but "obli*que*" is inflexible, and stands its ground. He would do well who should shove it away, or push it into the ranks of the new militia. "Anti*que*" is the worst portion of Gray's heritage. His former friend, Horace Walpole, had many *antiques*, and other trifles at Strawberry-hill, but none so worthless as

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this. In honest truth, we neither have, nor had then, a better and purer writer than he, although he lived in the time of the purest and best, Goldsmith, Sterne, Fielding, and Inchbald. He gave up his fashionable french for a richer benefice. He would not use "*rouge*" but "*red*;" very different from the ladies and gentlemen of the present day, who bring in entremets, and lardès, casting now and then upon the lukewarm hearth a log of latin, and in the sleeping-room they have prepared for us, spread out as counterpane a remnant of etruscan from under a courier's saddlebag.

Chaucer, who had resided long in France, and much among courtiers, made english his style. Have you patience to read a list of the words he spelt better than we do? and not he only but his remote successors.

Archdeacon Hare. I have patience, and more than patience, to read, or hear, or see, whatever is better than ourselves. Such investigations have always interested me, you know of old.

Walter Landor. Rare quality! I scarcely know where to find another who possesses it, or whose anger would not obtain the mastery over his conscience at the imputation.

Let your eyes run down this catalogue. Here are *swete* and *swote*, *finde*, *ther*, *wel*, *herken*, *herk*, *gilt* (guilt), *shal*, *don* (done), *werks* (works), *weping*, *clene*, *defaulte*, *therof*, *speking*, *erthe*, *bereth* (beareth), *seate*, *mete* (meat), *shuld* (should), *hevy*, *hevn*, *grevous*, *grete*, *hete*, *yere*, *fode* (food); we stil say *fodder*, not fooder; *ete* (eat), *lede*, *throt*, *wel*, *drede*, *shal*, *gess* (guess), *ful*, *wheras*, *trespas*, *betwene*, *repe*, *slepe*, *shete*, *frend*, *dedly*, *delites*, *teres*, *hering*, *clereness*, *juge*, *plese*, *speke*, *wold* (would), *ded*, *tred*, *bereve*, *thred*, *peple*, *dore*, *dreme*, *deme*, *reson*, *indede*, *meke*, *feble*, *wede*, *nede*, *fele*, *cese*, *pece*, *dedly*, *deme*, *resonable*, *slepe*, *titel*, *refrein*, *preeste*.

Archdeacon Hare. In adding the vowel, he makes it available for verse. *Covetise*, how much better than *covetiousness!* Among the words which might be brought back again to adorn our poetical diction is *beforne*, before. Here is *distemperament* (for inclemency of season); *forlet*, forgive, another good word; so is *wanhope*, despair. Has no poet the courage to step forth and to rescue these maidens of speech, unprotected beneath the very castle-walls of Chaucer?

Walter Landor. If they are resolved to stitch up his rich old tapestry with muslin, they would better let it stay where it is.

Archdeacon Hare. Several more words are remaining in which a

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single vowel is employed where we reduplicate. *Sheres*, *appere*, *speche*, *wele*, *bereth*, *reson*, *mening*, *pleasance*, *stele*, *coles*, *mekeness*, *reve* (bereave), *rore*, *tong*, *corageous*, *forbere*, *kepe*, *othe* (oath), *cese*, *shepe*, *dreme*, *werse* (worse), *reken* (reckon). Certainly this old spelling is more proper than its substitute. To reken is to *look over* an account before casting it up. Here are *grevance*, *lerne*, *bete*, *seke*, *speke*, *freze* (freeze), *chese*, *clense*, *tretise*, *meke*. Here I find *axe* (ask), which is now a vulgarism, though we use *tax* for *task*. With great propriety he writes *persever;* we, with great impropriety, *persevere*. He uses the word *spiced* for *overnice*, which in common use is *gingerly*. I think you would not be a stickler for the best of these, whichever it may be.

Walter Landor. No indeed: but there are in Chaucer, as there are in other of our old, yet somewhat later writers, things which with regret I see cast aside for worse. I wish every editor of an author, whether in poetry or prose, would at least add a glossary of his words as he spelt and wrote them, without which attention the history of a language must be incomplete. Heine in his Virgil, Wakefield in his Lucretius, have preserved the text itself as entire as possible. Greek words do not appear in their spelling to have been subject to the same vicissitudes as latin.

I have not been engaged in composing a grammar or vocabulary, nor is a conversation a treatise; so with your usual kindness you will receive a confused collection of words, bearing my mark on them and worthy of yours. They are somewhat like an Italian pastry, of heads and necks and feet and gizzards off a variety of birds of all sorts and sizes. If my simily is undignified, let me go back into the Sistine Chapel, where Michel Angiolo displays the same thing more gravely and grandly in his *Last Judgment*.

Archdeacon Hare. Do not dissemble your admiration of this illustrious man, nor turn into ridicule what you reverence. Among the hardy and false things caught from mouth to mouth is the apothegm that "there is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous." There was indeed but a step from Bonaparte's.

Walter Landor. I perceive you accept the saying as his. It was uttered long before his birth, and so far back as the age of Louis the Fourteenth. Another is attributed to him, which was spoken by Barrère in the Convention. He there called the English "cette nation *boutiquière*."

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Archdeacon Hare. Well, now empty out your sack of words, and never mind which comes first.

Walter Landor. Probably there are several of them which we have noticed before. Here are a few things which I have markt with my pencil from time to time; others are obliterated, others lost.

There is a very good reason why *ravel* and *travel* should be spelt with a single *l*, pronunciation requires it; equally does pronunciation require a double l in befell, expell, compell, rebell.

We often find *kneeled* instead of *knelt*, yet I do not remember *feeled* for *felt*. Shaftesbury, and the best writers of his age and later, wrote *cou'd, shou'd, wou'd:* we do not, although in speaking we never insert the *l*. Hurd writes, "*Under* the *circumstances*." Circumstances are *about* us, not *above* us.

"Master of the situation," is the only expression we have borrowed lately of the Spanish, and it is not worth having.

I have observed *rent* as preterite of *rend:* improper: as *ment* would be of *mend*.

All too well, &c., the word *all* used needlessly. *All* the greater, &c. These expressions are among the many which have latterly been swept out of the servants' hall, who often say (no doubt), "I am all the better for my dinner."

Daresay is now written as one word.

Egotist should be *egoist:* to *doze* should not be written *dose*, as it often is.

I once was present when a scholar used the words *vexed question:* he was not laughed at, although he was thought a pedant for it; many would willingly be thought pedants who never can be; but they can more cheaply be thought affected, as they would be if they assumed this latinism. In our english sense, many a question vexes, none is vext. The sea is *vexatum* when it is tost hither and thither, to and fro; but a question, however unsettled, has never been so called in good english.

"*Sought* his bedchamber;" improper, because he knew where it was. To *seek* is to go after what may or may not be found. *Firstly* is no English. To *gather* a rose is improper. To gather *two* roses would be proper. Better to *cull*, which may be said of choosing one out of several; *cull* is from the italian *cogliere*, originally in latin *colligare*. But to us in our vernacular, the root is invisible: not so to *gather*, of which we are reminded by "*together*."

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There is a bull of the largest Irish breed in nearly the most beautiful of Wordsworth's poems.

> "I lived upon what casual bounty yields,
> Now coldly given, *now utterly refused.*"

The Irish need not cry out for their potatoes, if they can live upon what they can not get.

> "The child is father of the man,"

says Wordsworth, well and truly. The verse animadverted on must have been written before the boy had begotten his parent.

What can be sillier than those verses of his which many have quoted with unsuspicious admiration?

> "A maid whom there was none to praise,
> And very few to love."

He might have written more properly if the rhyme and meter had allowed it,

> "A maid whom there were none to love,
> And very few to praise."

For surely the few who loved her would praise her. Here he makes love subordinate to praise: there were some who loved her, none (even of these) who praised her. Readers of poetry hear the bells, and seldom mind what they are ringing for. Where there is laxity there is inexactness.

Frequently there are solid knolls in the midst of Wordsworth's morass, but never did I expect to find so much animation, such vigour, such succinctness, as in the paragraph beginning with

> "All degrees and shapes of spurious form,"

and ending with

> "Left to herself, unheard of and unknown."

Here indeed the waggoner's frock drops off, and shows to our surprise the imperial purple underneath it. Here is the brevity and boldness of Cowper; here is heart and soul; here is the εικων βασιλικη of Poetry.

I believe there are few, if any, who enjoy more heartily than I do, the best poetry of my contemporaries, or who have commended them

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both in private and in public with less parsimony and reserve. Several of them, as you know, are personally my friends, although we seldom meet. Perhaps in some I may desiderate the pure ideal of what is simply great. If we must not always look up at Theseus and the Amazons, we may however catch more frequent glimpses of the Graces, with their zones on, and their zones only. Amplification and diffuseness are the principal faults of those who are now standing the most prominent. Dilution does not always make a thing the clearer; it may even cause turbidity.

Archdeacon Hare. Stifness is as bad as laxness. Pindar and Horace, Milton and Shakespeare, never caught the cramp in their mountain-streams: their movements are as easy as they are vigorous.

Walter Landor. The strongest are the least subject to stifness. Diffuseness is often the weakness of vanity. The vain poet is of opinion that nothing of his can be too much: he sends to you basketful after basketful of juiceless fruit covered with scentless flowers.

Archdeacon Hare. Many an unlucky one is like the big and bouncing foot-ball, which is blown up in its cover by unseemly puffing, and serves only for the game of the day. I am half-inclined to take you to task, my dear friend, feeling confident and certain that I should do it without offence.

Walter Landor. Without offence, but not without instruction. Here I am ready at the desk, with both hands down.

Archdeacon Hare. To be serious. Are you quite satisfied that you never have sought a pleasure in detecting and exposing the faults of authors, even good ones?

Walter Landor. I have here and there sought that pleasure, and found it. To discover a truth and to separate it from a falsehood, is surely an occupation worthy of the best intellect, and not at all unworthy of the best heart. Consider how few of our countrymen have done it, or attempted it, on works of criticism: how few of them have analyzed and compared. Without these two processes there can be no sound judgement on any production of genius. We are accustomed to see the beadel limp up into the judge's chair; to hear him begin with mock gravity, and to find him soon dropping it for his natural banter. He condemns with the black cap on, but we discover through its many holes and dissutures the uncombed wig. Southey

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is the first and almost the only one of our critics who moves between his intellect and his conscience, close to each.

Archdeacon Hare. How much better would it be if our reviewers and magazine-men would analyze, in this manner, to the extent of their abilities, and would weigh evidence before they pass sentence. But they appear to think that unless they hazard much they can win little; while in fact they hazard and lose a great deal more than there is any possibility of their recovering. One rash decision ruins the judge's credit, which twenty correcter never can restore. Animosity, or perhaps something more ignoble, usually stimulates rampant inferiority against high desert.

I have never found you disconcerted by any injustice toward yourself; not even by the assailants of this our Reformation.

Walter Landor. If we know a minor, whose guardians and trustees have been robbing him of his patrimony, or misapplying it, or wearing out the land by bad tillage, would we not attempt to recover for him whatever we could; and especially if we were intimate with the family, if we had enjoyed the shade of its venerable woods, the refreshing breezes from its winding streams, and had in our early days taken our walks among them for study, and in our still earlier gone into the depths of its forests for our recreation?

Archdeacon Hare. Next in criminality to him who violates the laws of his country, is he who violates the language. In this he is a true patriot, and somewhat beside,

"Qui consulta patrum qui leges juraque servat."

Byron is among the defaulters. On Napoleon he says "Like *he* of Babylon." "The *annal* of Gibbon." "I have *eat*," &c. There is a passage in Tacitus on a vain poet, Luterius, remarkably applicable to our lately fashionable one. "Studia illa, ut plena vecordiæ, ita inania et fluxa sunt: nec quidquam grave ac serium ex eo metuas qui, suorum ipse flagitiorum proditor, non virorum animis sed mulierculorum adrepit."

Walter Landor. It suits him perfectly. I would however pardon him some false grammar and some false sentiment, for his vigorous application of the scourge to the two monsters of dissimilar configuration who degraded and disgraced, at the same period, the two most illustrious nations in the world. The Ode against Napoleon is full of animation: against the other there is less of it; for animation is

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incompatible with nausea. Byron had good action, but he tired by fretting, and tossing his head, and rearing.

Archdeacon Hare. Let reflections for a moment give way to recollections. In the morning we were interrupted in some observations on the aspirate.

Walter Landor. Either I said, or was about to say, that the aspirate, wherever it is written, should be pronounced. If we say "*a* house," why not say "*a* hour"? if "*a* horse," why not "*a* honour"? Nobody says "*an* heavy load," "*an* heavenly joy," "*an* holy man," "*an* hermit," "*an* high place," "*an* huge monster," "*an* holly-bough," "*an* happy day." Let the minority yield here to the majority. Our capriciousness in admitting or rejecting the service of the aspirate was contracted from the French. The Italians, not wanting it, sent it off, and called it back merely for a mark discriminatory, for instance in the verb *Ho, hai, ha.*

Archdeacon Hare. You have been accused of *phonetic* spelling.

Walter Landor. Inconsiderately, and with even less foundation than falsehood has usually under it. Nothing seems to me more grossly absurd, or more injurious to an ancient family, the stem of our words and thoughts. Such a scheme, about fourscore years ago, was propounded by Elphinstone: it has lately been reproduced, only to wither and die down again.

Archdeacon Hare. I always knew, and from yourself, that you are a "good hater" of innovation, and that your efforts were made strenuously on the opposite side, attempting to recover in our blurred palimpsests what was written there of old. We have dropt a great deal of what is good, as you just now have shown, and we have taken into our employment servants without a character, or with a worthless one. We adorn our new curtains with faded fringe, and embellish stout buckskin with point-lace.

Walter Landor. After this conversation, if it ever should reach the public ear, I may be taken up for a brawl in the street, more serious than an attack on the new grammar-school,

Archdeacon Hare. What can you mean? Taken up? For a brawl?

Walter Landor. Little are you aware that I have lately been accused of a graver offence, and one committed in the dark.

Archdeacon Hare. And in the dark you leave me. Pray explain.

Walter Landor. I am indited for perpetrating an *Epic.*

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Archdeacon Hare. Indeed! I am glad to hear the announcement. And when does the cause come into court? And who is the accuser? And what are his grounds?

Walter Landor. Longer ago by some years than half a century, I wrote *Gebir*. The cause and circumstances I have detailed elsewhere.

Archdeacon Hare. Is this the epic?

Walter Landor. It appears so.

Archdeacon Hare. Already you look triumphant from that ancient car.

Walter Landor. No truly; I am too idle for a triumph: and the enemy's forces were so small that none could legitimately be decreed.

> "Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor
> Qui face barbaricos calamoque sequare colonos."
>
> "Surely shall some one come, alert and kind,
> With torch and quill to guide the blundering hind."

Archdeacon Hare. Clowns and boys and other idlers, if they see a head above a garden-wall, are apt to throw a pebble at it, which mischief they abstain from doing when the head is on their level and near.

Walter Landor. Nobody reads this poem, I am told; and nothing more likely.

Archdeacon Hare. Be that as it may. The most disappointed of its readers would be the reader who expected to find an epic in it. To the *epic* not only its certain spirit, but its certain form, is requisite; and not only in the main body, but likewise in the minute articulations. I do not call *epic* that which is in lyric meter, nor indeed in any species of rhyme. The cap and bells should never surmount the helmet and breastplate; Ariosto and Tasso are lyrical romancers. Your poem, which Southey tells us he took for a model, is in blank verse.

Walter Landor. Southey, whom I never had known or corresponded with, hailed it loudly in the *Critical Review*, on its first appearance. He recommended it to Charles Wynne, Charles Wynne to the Hebers; they to your uncle Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph's. Southey's splendid criticism, whatever may be the defects and deficiencies of the poem, must have attracted at the time some other readers; yet I believe (though I never heard or inquired) that they were not numerous. Frere, Canning, and Bobus Smith were among them. Enough for me.

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Within these few months, a wholesale dealer in the brittle crockery of market criticism has pickt up some shards of it, and stuck them in his shelves. Among them is my *Sea-shell*, which Wordsworth clapt into his pouch. There it became incrusted with a compost of mucus and shingle; there it lost its "pearly hue within," and its memory of where it had abided.

Archdeacon Hare. But Wordsworth had the industry and skill to turn everything to some account.

Walter Landor. Perfectly true. And he is indebted to me for more than the value of twenty *Shells:* he is indebted to me for praise, if not more profuse, yet surely more discriminating, than of those critics who were collected at wakes and hired by Party. Such hospital-nurses kill some children by starving, and others by pampering with unwholesome food.

Archdeacon Hare. I have often heard you express your admiration of Wordsworth; and I never heard you complain, or notice, that he owed any thing to you.

Walter Landor. Truly he owes me little. My shell may be among the prettiest on his mantelpiece, but a trifle it is at best. I often wish, in his longest poem, he had obtained an Inclosure-act, and subdivided it. What a number of delightful Idyls it would have afforded! It is pity that a vapour of metaphysics should overhang and chill any portion of so beautiful a plain; of which, however, the turf would be finer and the glebe solider for a moderate expenditure in draining and top-dressing.

Archdeacon Hare. Your predilections led you to rank Southey higher.

Walter Landor. Wordsworth has not written three poems so excellent as *Thalaba*, the *Curse of Kehama*, and *Roderic;* nor indeed any poem exhibiting so great a variety of powers. Southey had abundance of wit and humour, of which Wordsworth, like greater men, such for instance as Göthe and Milton, was destitute. The present age will easily pardon me for placing here the German and the Englishman together: the future, I sadly fear, would, without some apology, be inexorable. If Wordsworth wants the diversity and invention of Southey, no less than the humour, he wants also the same geniality belonging in the same degree to Cowper, with terseness and succinctness.

Archdeacon Hare. You have often extolled, and in the presence

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of many, the beauty of his rural scenes and the truth of his rural characters.

Walter Landor. And never will I forego an opportunity. In the delineation of such scenes and characters, far, infinitely far beneath him are Virgil and Theocritus. Yet surely it is an act of grievous cruelty, however unintentional, in those who thrust him into the same rank and file with Milton. He wants muscle, breadth of shoulder, and highth.

Archdeacon Hare. Sometimes he may be prosaic.

Walter Landor. He slithers on the soft mud, and can not stop himself until he comes down. In his poetry there is as much of prose as there is of poetry in the prose of Milton. But prose on certain occasions can bear a great deal of poetry: on the other hand, poetry sinks and swoons under a moderate weight of prose; and neither fan nor burnt feather can bring her to herself again.

It is becoming and decorous that due honours be paid to Wordsworth; undue have injured him. Discriminating praise mingled with calm censure is more beneficial than lavish praise without it. Respect him; reverence him; abstain from worshipping him. Remember, no ashes are lighter than those of incence, and few things burn out sooner.

Archdeacon Hare. It appears that you yourself, of late, have not suffered materially by the wafting of the thurible.

Walter Landor. Faith! I had quite forgotten what we were speaking about last.

It was about myself, I suspect, and the worthy at Edinburgh who *reviews* me. According to him, it appears that only two had read *Gebir*, namely, Southey and Mr. De Quincey. I have mentioned a few others; I might have added Coleridge, to whom Southey lent it, and who praised it even more enthusiastically, until he once found Southey reciting a part of it in company: after which, I am told, he never mentioned it, or slightly. In the year of its publication Carey, translator of Dante, had praised it. His opinion of it I keep to myself, as one among the few which I value. This was long before Mr. De Quincey knew Southey. It is marvelous that a man of so retentive a memory, as Southey, should have forgotten a thing to which he himself had given its importance: it is less so that Mr. De Quincey imagined it, under the influence of that narcotic the effects of

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which he so ingenuously and so well described, before he exhibited this illustration.

He had another *imaginary conversation* with Southey, in which they agree that *Gebir* very much resembled the *Argonautics* of Valerius Flaccus. Hearing of this, about a twelvemonth ago, I attempted to read that poem, but was unsuccessful. Long before, and when my will was stronger, I foundered in the midst of Statius. Happily in my schooldays, I had mastered Lucan and Juvenal.

Archdeacon Hare. They are grandly declamatory: but declamation overlays and strangles poetry, and disfigures even satire.

Walter Landor. Reserving the two mentioned, and Martial, I doubt whether the most speculative magazine-man would hazard five pounds for the same quantity of *english* poetry (rightly called *letter-press*) as all the other post-Ovidian poets have left behind. After the banishment of Ovid hardly a breath of pure poetry breathed over the *Campagna di Roma.* Declamation was spouted in floodgate verse: Juvenal and Lucan are high in that school, in which, at the close of the poetical day, was heard the street cow-horn of Statius.

Archdeacon Hare. Even for the company of such as these, I think I would have left the Reeker in *Auld Reekie.* Flies are only the more troublesome and importunate for being driven off, and they will keep up with your horse, however hard you ride, without any speed or potency of their own.

Walter Landor. True: but people who sell unsound wares, and use false scales and measures, ought to be pointed out and put down, although we ourselves may be rich enough to lose an ounce or two by their filching.

Archdeacon Hare. No one ever falls among a crowd of literary men without repenting of it sooner or later. You may encounter a single hound outside the kennel, but there is danger if you enter in among them, even with a kind intention and a bland countenance.

Walter Landor. It must be a dog in the distemper that raises up his spine at me. I have spoken favourably of many an author, undeservedly of none: therefore both at home and abroad I have received honorary visits from my countrymen and from foreners.

Archdeacon Hare. Possibly there may be some of them incontinent of the acrimonious humour pricking them in the paroxism of wit. I know not whether there be any indication of it in the soil under your shovel. Grains of wit, however, may sometimes be found in petu-

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lance, as grains of gold in quartz; but petulance is not wit, nor quartz gold.

Are you aware how much thought you have here been throwing away?

Walter Landor. My dear friend! thought is never thrown away: wherever it falls, or runs, or rests, it fertilizes. I speak not of that thought which has evil in it, or which tends to evil, but of that which is the exercise of intellect on the elevated and healthy training-ground of truth. We descend; and as we descend, we may strike off the head of a thistle, or blow away the wandering seed of a dandelion which comes against the face, but, in a moment forgetting them totally, we carry home with us freshness and strength.

Archdeacon Hare. I have never known you, at any former time, take much trouble about your literary concerns.

Walter Landor. Never have I descended to repell an attack, and never will; but I must defend the understanding and consistency of a wiser and better man in Southey. Never have I feared that a little and loose petard would burst or unhinge the gates of my fortress, or that a light culverine at a vast distance below would dismantle or reach the battlements.

Archdeacon Hare. It is dangerous to break into a park where the paling is high, for it may be difficult to find the way out again, or to escape the penalty of transgression. You never before spoke a syllable about your *Shell.*

Walter Landor. The swallow builds her nest under a Doric architrave, but does not build it of the same materials.

Archdeacon Hare. It is amusing to observe the off-hand facility and intrepid assurance with which small writers attack the greater, as small birds do, pursuing them the more vociferously the higher the flight. Milton stoopt and struck down two or three of these obstreperous chatterers, of which the feathers he scattered are all that remains; and these are curiosities.

It is moroseness to scowl at the levity of impudence; it is affability, not without wisdom, to be amused by it. Graver men, critics of note, have seen very indistinctly, where the sun has been too bright for them. Gifford, the translator of Juvenal, who was often so grave that ordinary people took him for judicious, thought wit the better part of Shakespeare, and in which alone he was superior to his contemporaries. Another finds him sadly deficient in his female

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characters. Johnson's ear was insensible to Milton's diapason; and in his Life of Somervile he says,

"If blank verse be not tumid and gorgeous, it is crippled prose."

Walter Landor. Johnson had somewhat of the medlar in his nature; one side hard and austere, the other side unsound. We call him *affected* for his turgidity: this was not affected; it was the most natural part of him. He hated both affectation and tameness.

Archdeacon Hare. Two things intolerable, whether in prose or poetry. Wordsworth is guiltless at least of affectation.

Walter Landor. True; but he often is as tame as an abbess's cat, which in kittenhood has undergone the same operation as the Holy Father's choristers.

Archdeacon Hare. Sometimes indeed he might be more succinct. A belt is good for the breath, and without it we fail in the long run. And yet a man will always be more lookt at whose dress flutters in the air than he whose dress sits tight upon him: but he will soon be left on the roadside. Wherever there is a word beyond what is requisite to express the meaning, that word must be peculiarly beautiful in itself or strikingly harmonious; either of which qualities may be of some service in fixing the attention and enforcing the sentiment. But the proper word in the proper place seldom leaves anything to be desiderated on the score of harmony. The beauty of health and strength is more attractive and impressive than any beauty conferred by ornament. I know the delight you feel, not only in Milton's immortal verse, but (although less) in Wordsworth's.

Walter Landor. A Mozart to a Handel! But who is not charmed by the melody of Mozart? Critics have their favourites; and, like the same rank of people at elections, they chair one candidate and pelt another.

Archdeacon Hare. A smaller object may be so placed before a greater as to intercept the view of it in its just proportions. This is the favourite manœuvre in the Review-field. Fierce malignity is growing out of date. Nothing but fairness is spoken of; regret at the exposure of faults, real or imaginary, has taken place of derision, sarcasm, and arrogant condemnation. Nothing was wanting to Byron's consistency when he had exprest his contempt of Shakespeare.

Walter Landor. Giffords, who sniffed at the unsavory skirts of Juvenal, and took delight in paddling among the bubbles of azote,

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no longer ply the trade of critics to the same advantage. Generosity, in truth or semblance, is expected and required. Chattertons may die in poverty and despair; but Keatses are exposed no longer to a lingering death under that poison which paralyzes the heart, contempt.

Archdeacon Hare. In youth the appetite for fame is strongest. It is cruel and inhuman to withhold the sustenance which is necessary to the growth, if not the existence, of genius; sympathy, encouragement, commendation. Praise is not fame; but the praise of the intelligent is its precursor. *Vaticide* is no crime in the statute-book; but a crime, and a heavy crime, it is: and the rescue of a poet from a murderous enemy, although there is no oaken crown decreed for it, is among the higher virtues.

Walter Landor. Many will pass by; many will take the other side; many will cherish the less deserving; but some one, considerate and compassionate, will raise up the neglected: and, where a strong hand does it, several less strong will presently be ready to help. Alas! not always. There is nothing in the ruins of Rome which throws so chilling a shadow over the heart as the monument of Keats.

Our field of poetry at the present time is both wider and better cultivated than it has ever been. But if the tyrant of old who walked into the growing corn, to inculcate a lesson of *order* by striking off the heads of the higher poppies, were to enter ours, he would lay aside his stick, so nearly on a level is the crop. Every year there is more good poetry written now, in this our country, than was written between the *Metamorphoses* and the *Divina Commedia*. We walk no longer in the cast-off clothes of the ancients, often ill sewn at first, and now ill fitting. We have pulpier flesh, stouter limbs, we take longer walks, explore wider fields, and surmount more craggy and more lofty eminences. From these let us take a leisurely look at Fancy and Imagination. Your friend Wordsworth was induced to divide his minor Poems under the separate heads of these two; probably at the suggestion of Coleridge, who persuaded him, as he himself told me, to adopt the name of *Lyrical Ballads*. He was sorry, he said, that he took the advice. And well he might be; for *lyre* and *ballad* belong not to the same age or the same people. It would have puzzled Coleridge to have drawn a strait boundary-line between the domains of Fancy and those of Imagination, on a careful

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survey of these pieces; or perhaps to have given a satisfactory definition of their qualities.

Archdeacon Hare. Do you believe you yourself can?

Walter Landor. I doubt it. The face is not the same, but the resemblance is sisterly; and, even by the oldest friends and intimates of the family, one is often taken for the other, so nearly are they alike. Fancy is Imagination in her youth and adolescence. Fancy is always excursive; Imagination, not seldom, is sedate. It is the business of Imagination, in her maturity, to create and animate such Beings as are worthy of her plastic hand; certainly not by invisible wires to put marionettes in motion, nor to pin butterflies on blotting-paper. Vigorous thought, elevated sentiment, just expression, developement of character, power to bring man out from the secret haunts of his soul, and to place him in strong outline against the sky, belong to Imagination. Fancy is thought to dwell among the Faeries and their congeners; and they frequently lead the weak and ductile poet far astray. He is fond of playing at *little-go* among them; and, when he grows bolder, he acts among the Witches and other such creatures; but his hankering after the Faeries still continues. Their tiny rings, in which the intelligent see only the growth of fungusses, are no arena for action and passion. It was not in these circles that Homer and Æschylus and Dante strove.

Archdeacon Hare. But Shakespeare sometimes entered them, who, with infinitely greater power, moulded his composite and consistent Man, breathing into him an immortality never to be forfeited.

Walter Landor. Shakespeare's full strength and activity were exerted on Macbeth and Othello: he trifled with Ariel and Titania; he played with Caliban: but no other would have thought of playing with him, any more than of playing with Cerberus. Shakespeare and Milton and Chaucer have more imagination than any of those to whom the quality is peculiarly attributed. It is not inconsistent with vigour and gravity. There may be a large and effuse light without

"the motes that people the sunbeams."

Imagination follows the steps of Homer throughout the Troad, from the ships on the strand to Priam and Helen on the city-wall:

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Imagination played with the baby Astyanax at the departure of Hector from Andromache, and was present at the noblest scene of the Iliad, where, to repeat a verse of Cowper's on Achilles, more beautiful than Homer's own,

"his hand he placed
On the old man's hand, *and pusht it gently away.*"

No less potently does Imagination urge Æschylus on, from the range of beacons to the bath of Agamemnon; nor expand less potently the vulture's wing over the lacerated bosom on the rocks of Caucasus. With the earliest flowers of the freshly created earth Imagination strewed the nuptial couch of Eve. Not Ariel, nor Caliban, nor Witches who ruled the elements, but Eve, and Satan, and Prometheus, are the most wonderous and the most glorious of her works. Imagination takes the weaker hand of Virgil out of Dante's who grasps it, and guides the Florentine exile thro the triple world.

Archdeacon Hare. Whatever be your enthusiasm for the great old masters, you must often feel, if less of so strong an impulse, yet a cordial self-congratulation in having bestowed so many eulogies on poetical contemporaries, and on others whose genius is apart from poetry.

Walter Landor. Indeed I do. Every meed of Justice is delivered out of her own full scale. The poets, and others who may rank with them, indeed all the great men, have borne toward me somewhat more than civility. The few rudenesses I have ever heard of, are from such as neither I nor you ever meet in society, and such as warm their fingers and stomachs round less ornamental hearths.

When they to whom we have been unknown, or indifferent, begin to speak a little well of us, we are sure to find some honest old friend ready to trim the balance. I have had occasion to smile at this.

Archdeacon Hare. We sometimes stumble upon sly invidiousness and smouldering malignity, quite unexpectedly, and in places which we should have believed were above the influence of such malaria. When Prosperity pays to Wisdom her visit in state, would we not, rather than halloo the yard-dog against her, clear the way for her, and adorn the door with garlands? How fond are people in general

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of clinging to a great man's foibles! they can climb no higher. It is not the solid, it is the carious, that grubs feed upon.

Walter Landor. The practice of barring out the master is still continued in the world's great schoolroom. Our sturdy boys do not fear a flogging; they fear only a book or a lecture.

Archdeacon Hare. Authors are like cattle going to a fair; those of the same field can never move on without butting one another.

Walter Landor. It has been my fortune and felicity, from my earliest days, to have avoided all competitions. My tutor at Oxford could never persuade me to write a piece of Latin poetry for the Prize, earnest as he was that his pupil should be a winner at the forthcoming *Encœnia.* Poetry was always my amusement, prose my study and business. I have publisht five volumes of *Imaginary Conversations:* cut the worst of them thro the middle, and there will remain in this decimal fraction quite enough to satisfy my appetite for fame. I shall dine late; but the diningroom will be well lighted, the guests few and select.

In this age of discovery it may haply be discovered, who first among our Cisalpine nations led Greek to converse like Greek, Roman like Roman, in poetry or prose. Gentlemen of fashion have patronized them occasionally, have taken them under the arm, have recommended their own tailor, their own perfumer, and have lighted a cigar for them from their own at the door of the *Traveler's* or *Athenæum:* there they parted.

Archdeacon Hare. Before we go into the house again, let me revert to what you seem to have forgotten, the hasty and inaccurate remarks on *Gebir.*

Walter Landor. It is hardly worth our while. Evidently they were written by a very young person, who with a little encouragement, and induced to place his confidence in somewhat safer investment than himself, may presently do better things.

Archdeacon Hare. Southey too, I remember, calls the poem in some parts obscure.

Walter Landor. It must be, if Southey found it so. I never thought of asking him where lies the obscurity: I would have attempted to correct whatever he disapproved.

Archdeacon Hare. He himself, the clearest of writers, professes that he imitated your versification: and the style of his *Colloquies* is in some degree modified by yours.

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Walter Landor. Little cause had he for preferring any other to his own.

Perhaps the *indictum ore alio* is my obscurity. Göthe is acknowledged by his highest admirers to be obscure in several places; which he thinks a poet may and should be occasionally. I differ from him, and would avoid it everywhere: he could see in the dark. This great poet carries it with him so far as into *Epigram*. I now regret that I profited so little by the calm acuteness of Southey. In what poet of the last nineteen centuries, who has written so much, is there less intermixture of prose, or less contamination of conceit? in what critic, who has criticized so many, less of severity or assumption?

I would never fly for shelter under the strongest wing: but you know that commentators, age after age, have found obscurities in Pindar, in Dante, and in Shakespeare.

Archdeacon Hare. And it is not in every place the effect of time. You have been accused, I hear, either by this writer or some such another, of *turgidity*.

Walter Landor. Certainly by this: do not imagine there is anywhere such another.

Archdeacon Hare. Without a compliment, no poet of ours is less turgid. Guests may dispense with potage and puff-paste, with radishes and water-cresses, with salad and cream-cheese, who "implentur veteris bacchi pinguisque ferinæ."

Walter Landor. Encouraged by your commendation, let me read to you (for I think I placed it this evening in my pocket) what was transcribed for me as a curiosity out of the same *Article*. Yes; here it is.

"His great defect is a certain crudeness of the judgment, implied in the selection of the subject matter, and a further want of skill and perspicuity in the treatment. Except in a few passages, it has none of those peculiar graces of style and sentiment which render the writings of our more prominent modern authors so generally delightful."

Archdeacon Hare. Opinion on most matters, but chiefly on literary, and above all on poetical, seems to me like an empty eggshell in a duck-pond, turned on its stagnant water by the slightest breath of air; at one moment the crackt side nearer to sight, at another the sounder, but the emptiness at all times visible.

Is your detractor a brother poet?

Walter Landor. An incipient one he may be. Poets in that stage of existence, subject to sad maladies, kick hard for life and scratch

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the nurse's face. Like some trees, fir trees for instance, they must attain a certain highth and girth before they are serviceable or sightly.

Archdeacon Hare. The weakest wines fall soonest into the acetous fermentation; the more generous retain their sweetness with their strength. Somewhat of this diversity is observable in smaller wits and greater, more especially in the warm climate where poetry is the cultivation.

Walter Landor. The ancients often hung their trophies on obtruncated and rotten trees: we may do the like at present, leaving our enemies for sepulture.

Archdeacon Hare. Envy of pre-eminence is universal and everlasting. Little men, whenever they find an opportunity, follow the steps of greater in this dark declivity. The apple of Discord was full-grown soon after the Creation. It fell between the two first brothers in the garden of Eden: it fell between two later on the plain of Thebes. Narrow was the interval, when again it gleamed portentously on the short grass of Ida. It rolled into the palace of Pella, dividing Philip and "Philip's godlike son:" it followed that insatiable youth to the extremities of his conquests, and even to his sepulcher; then it broke the invincible phalanx and scattered the captains wide apart. It lay in the gates of Carthage, so that they could not close against the enemy: it lay between the generous and agnate families of Scipio and Gracchus. Marius and Sulla, Julius and Pompeius, Octavius and Antonius, were not the last who experienced its fatal malignity. King imprisoned king, emperor stabbed emperor, pope poisoned pope, contending for God's vicegerency. The rollcall of their names, with a cross against each, is rotting in the lumber-room of History. Do not wonder then if one of the rabble runs after you from the hustings, and, committing no worse mischief, snatches at the colours in your hatband.

Walter Landor. Others have snatcht more. My quarry lies upon a high common a good way from the public road, and everybody takes out of it what he pleases "with privy paw, and nothing said" beyond "*a curse on the old fellow! how hard his granite is, one can never make it fit.*" This is all I get of quitrent or acknowledgment. I know of a poacher who noosed a rabbit on my warren, and I am told he made such a fricassee of it that there was no taste of rabbit or sauce. I never had him taken up: he is at large, drest in new clothes, and worth money.

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Archdeacon Hare. Your manors are extensive, comprehending

> "Prata, arva, ingentes sylvas, saltusque paludesque
> Usque ad oceanum."

Walter Landor. I never drive the poor away if they come after dry sticks only, but they must not with impunity lop or burn my plantations.

Archdeacon Hare. I regret that your correspondent was sickened or tired of transcribing.

Walter Landor. Here is another slip from the same crabtree. It is objected that most of my poems are occasional.

Archdeacon Hare. In number they may be, but in quantity of material I doubt whether they constitute a seventh. We will look presently, and we shall find perhaps that the gentleman is unlucky at his game of hazard.

Walter Landor. Certainly his play is not deep. We who are sober dare not sit down at a table where a character may be lost at a cast: they alone are so courageous who have nothing to be seized on.

Archdeacon Hare. The gentleman sweeps the cloth with little caution and less calculation. Of your poems the smaller alone are occasional: now not only are the smaller, but the best, of Catullus and Horace, and all of Pindar. Were not the speeches of Lysias, Æschines, Demosthenes, occasional? Draw nearer home. What but occasional were the *Letters of Junius?* Materiem superabat opus.

Walter Landor. True. The ministers and their king are now mould and worms; they were little better when above-ground; but the bag-wig and point-lace of *Junius* are suspended aloft upon a golden peg for curiosity and admiration.

Archdeacon Hare. Regarding the occasional in poetry; is there less merit in taking and treating what is before us, than in seeking and wandering through an open field as we would for mushrooms?

Walter Landor. I stand out a rude rock in the middle of a river, with no exotic or parasitical plant on it, and few others. Eddies and dimples and froth and bubbles pass rapidly by, without shaking me. Here indeed is little room for pic-nic and polka.

Archdeacon Hare. Praise and censure are received by you with nearly the same indifference.

Walter Landor. Not yours. Praise on poetry, said to be the most

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exhilarating of all, affects my brain but little. Certainly I never attempted to snatch "the peculiar graces so generally delightful." My rusticity has at least thus much of modesty in it.

Archdeacon Hare.

"The richest flowers have not most honey-cells.
You seldom find the bee about the rose,
Oftener the beetle eating into it.
The violet less attracts the noisy hum
Than the minute and poisonous bloom of box.
Poets know this; Nature's invited guests
Draw near and note it down and ponder it;
The idler sees it, sees unheedingly,
Unheedingly the rifler of the hive."

Is your critic wiser, more experienced, and of a more poetical mind than Southey? Utri horum creditis, Quirites?

Vanity and presumption are not always the worst parts of the man they take possession of, although they are usually the most prominent. Malignity sticks as closely to him, and keeps more cautiously out of sight. Sorry I have often been to see a fellow Christian, one of much intellect and much worth, one charitable to the poor, one attendant on the sick, one compassionate with the sufferer, one who never is excited to anger but by another's wrongs, enjoying a secret pleasure in saying unpleasant things at no call of duty; inflicting wounds which may be long before they heal; and not only to those who are unfriendly or unknown, but likewise to the nearest and the friendliest. Meanwhile those who perhaps are less observant of our ritual, not only abstain from so sinful an indulgence, but appear to be guided in their demeanour by the less imperative and less authoritative dictate of Philosophy. I need not exhort or advise you, who have always done it, to disregard the insignificant and obscure, so distant from you, so incapable of approaching you. Only look before you at this instant; and receive a lesson from Nature, who is able and ready at all times to teach us, and to teach men wiser than we are. Unwholesome exhalations creep over the low marshes of Pevensey, but they ascend not to Beachy-head nor to Hurstmonceaux.

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XXVI. ALFIERI AND METASTASIO.

Metastasio. The Contessa di Albani has conferred on me the long-desired honour of presentation to your Excellency.

Alfieri. I rejoice in her goodness thus anticipating my wishes. As you are journeying toward Rome, Signor Abbate, I fear I may enjoy but too few opportunities of conversing with so justly celebrated a personage. Already the company begins to assemble round about us, especially the English, eager, no doubt, to derive a little pure Italian from so high a source; such, in the estimation of all, is that of the Abbate Metastasio, Poeta Cesarèo.

Metastasio. I bow, not indeed, as too frequently is the case, in acknowledgement and acceptance, but in humility and confusion. Proud, however, am I that our own Italy . . .

Alfieri. Ours? ours? No, sir! but, by Heaven! it shall be! Let us descend into the library. France perhaps, after the imminent war with Austria, may barter one piece of robbery for another. Already she has seduced the affections of Savoy, and is reminding the Venetians that, flourishing and happy as they have continued for a thousand years, it is shameful to owe any happiness or prosperity to nobles. Either by fraud or force, on the humiliation of Austria, Venice may be thrown to her, like a stranded weed with empty shells upon it.

Metastasio. Austria ever have Venice! Are there no Powers to prevent it? If no virtues, are there no jealousies? God help us! we have calamities enough already.

Alfieri. No, abbate, we have *not* enough; we must have more, many more, much greater. Then, and then only, will nations spring

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up from apathy to despair, and smash the bloody idol. We shall be free before the French will.

Metastasio. Since your excellency hath resolved to leave your native Piedemont, I know not where you could have settled more comfortably than here in Tuscany.

Alfieri. It is something to be unmolested. The prince, I hear, is tolerant; the people I find are civil; a few are intellectual; most of them acute. If the Jews lost ten tribes, they may recover nine in this country.

Metastasio. By what indication?

Alfieri. Such as the cut of the eye, the sallowness of complexion the low stature, the love of gain, the importunity of selling, and the shibboleth.

Metastasio. In what instances?

Alfieri. In the pronunciation of *Cicero* and *Cæsar*, words among the Romans neither sibilant nor dental; nor do I believe they had any such guttural as you hear in *cocomero*.

Metastasio. I would rather institute a comparison between their respective merits. The Jews alone, of all eastern nations, were great in poetry and music. I would not compare, as many scholars have done, the *Psalms of David* with the *Odes of Pindar*, nor do I readily believe that, musician as he was, his symphonies were equal to Handel's. There are various men who think it a duty to uphold it, and scholars too catch the enthusiasm.

Alfieri. Weak minds, like weak liquors, soon effervesce; and sound scholars have not always strong heads.

Metastasio. Permit me to remark one signal difference between the Jews and Tuscans. The Jews were always more morose than any other people, the Tuscans less.

Alfieri. Dante may be called morose by the inconsiderate. To be morose is one thing, to be indignant is another. He saw crimes in high places which the vulgar thought inaccessible; but he scaled the eminence and dragged out Cacus from his fastness. The Italians are tied to the stake at home: the Jews are scattered abroad. Which fate is the worse of the two? Both evils will pass away: men will be men again. They will abstain from roasting one another: royal feasts will employ less numerous and less expensive cooks, and be served up in lighter dishes. Human fat will be no longer the approved medicament for deafness and debility. The lover of

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Beatrice, he who shed tears over Francesca, he whose stout heart so failed him that he fainted at the recital of her sorrows, could never have been morose. Glory to him! everlasting glory! I envy his tears; I share his indignation.

Metastasio. There is somewhat of the Englishman in his austerity and sternness; and he is not over delicate in expressing what he feels.

Alfieri. The English are innately vulgar, with some few exceptions. Noblemen, suspicious and invidious of untitled gentlemen, whose families are more ancient and more honorable than theirs, and who perhaps lost their fortunes and their station by the wars of the Plantagenets, have no reluctance or dislike to walk and converse with jockeys and boxers; from these they gather the flowers of their phraseology. A new word springs up monthly, and is usually what they call *slang*. I will give you an example. A few days before I left England there had been a duel; on this occasion the younger, a man of rank and modesty, was declared by my informant to have shown *pluck*. You will suppose that by this expression he meant courage: he did so. We Italians would have said *spirit*, or *heart*, which comes nearest. But the meaning of *pluck*, until this year, had always been the *entrails of animals, torn out of them, and the vilest part of them*. The Romans were content with *cor* and *pectus;* we with their contents: *animo* and *coraggio* suffice us: what is ejected from a beast is to an Englishman the coronal of glory.

Metastasio. We shall owe, in great measure, the consummation of ours to the departed whose remains are around us.

Alfieri. In greater measure to those who are *not* departed, if we follow the right leaders. But what are leaders without soldiers, or soldiers without arms?

Metastasio. Ah! ah! how grateful to the senses is the odour of these volumes in *bulgaro!** Signor Conte, the most splendid of them best deserves its splendour.

Alfieri. Rarely the case in anything.

Metastasio. Vittorio Alfieri, Tragedie. Opere di Vittorio Alfieri. Pardon me, is this richly embroidered ribbon, with a crown pendant from it, the pattern for that *Order of Merit* which it is reported your Excellency is about to institute?

Alfieri. No indeed; the ribbon is none of mine.

* Bulgaro, *Russia* leather.

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Metastasio. May not possibly the investiture be displeasing to potentates?

Alfieri. Are any of those people, then, potentates in literature? Shall the most ignorant of mortals presume to decide on the merits of literary men? Shall ministers of state be appointed as presidents, or even admitted as members, of societies formed for the promotion of arts and sciences? Keep these men to their places, while they have any, but never let them get into ours.

Metastasio. Will your Order include others beside Italians?

Alfieri. As many as are worthy of it and will receive it. Some, perhaps the most-part, will be kept away from the acceptance by timidity and baseness.

Metastasio. In some measure it might be an impediment to their advancement. The glory of the decoration, in the generality of cases, would be posthumous: the whole number would occupy but a small bench in a narrow chamber. There are forty in France! Were there ever ten at one period in the world? Should you beat the drum for recruits, how many would enlist who must be rejected as below the standard highth? Poets and philosophers and critics, I am told, there are more in Germany, and better too, than in the rest of Europe.

Alfieri. I know nothing of their language; what I have read translated from it pleases me: the best, as being the most classical, is Stolberg's *Theseus*. Heroes, in my eyes, look more advantageously with brazen helmets on their heads than with black triangular feltry. I would rather see Helen in sandal or slipper, than supported by high-heeled red morocco shoes with diamond buckles on them. Being timorous, whenever I pass the porter's lodge of surly Graff Pyrrhus, I whistle my dog away, first saluting the gamekeeper in green jacket. Etcocles and Polinices are in the field above, models of gentlemen, quite correct in lifting up their beavers to each other before they make their passes with the rapier.

Metastasio. It must indeed be confest that whatever is far removed from fashionable life and changeable manners is best adapted to the higher poetry. We are glad and righteously proud to possess two worlds, the one at present under our feet, producing beef and mutton; the other, on which have past before us, gods, demigods, heroes, the Fates, the Furies, and all the numerous progeny of never-dying, never-aging, eternally parturient, Imagination. Great is the

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privilege of crossing at will the rivers of bitterness, of tears, of fire, and to wander and converse among the Shades.

Alfieri. Great indeed: and few incommode us in the ferry-boat; but we must pay for it.

Metastasio. You ridicule French tragedy; yet there may be noble sentiments under ostrich feathers, and the tender heart may beat as truly under blonde lace as under woolen spun by Penelope herself.

Alfieri. It may be: only let them try the woolen on; I will allow them a narrow ornamental fringe. At present I believe there is no poet in France.

Metastasio. In England you left a few deserving your notice.

Alfieri. Cowper is worthy of his succession to Goldsmith; more animated, more energetic, more diversified. Sometimes he is playful, oftener serious; and you go with him in either path with equal satisfaction. Sometimes he turns short round and reproves with dignified and authoritative austerity. This is not his nature, but his office, his duty, his *call*, as he would term it. There is a gentleness, a suavity about him, more Italian than English. The milk of Eve was not blander to her firstborn.

Metastasio. I had always thought that the English were more remarkable for the breed of their satirists and their bull-dogs.

Alfieri. So they are: but they have silk-eared spaniels also, and of pure blood. Whoever wants to see a worshipper of wealth and title, let him visit England.

Metastasio. The celebrated Doctor Johnson was dead, I think, before you arrived in that country: he was not very silken.

Alfieri. That heavy paw, however, if sometimes a crusher, was oftener a protector. Johnson was coarse in manners, and was arrogant and captious by the indulgence of his dry-nurses in the club-room. His sight was distorted by the refraction of politics; his temper was irritable, his sensibility was morbid, but his heart was sound. I see much to pity, and no little to admire and love in him.

Metastasio. Then, Signor Conte, he must be a man of rare merit indeed.

Alfieri. Bow again, my good Abbate; you do it gracefully.

Metastasio. Pardon! pardon! if I am under the calamity of offending.

Alfieri. Do I look or speak like one offended? Destitute as all my friends agree I am in wit and humour, I enjoy them occasionally

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in another. You spoke naturally and justly: you know me well already.

Metastasio. Signor Conte, my very good *padrone!* I feel at ease again. Now your Excellency has given me an insight into the character of the late poets and moralists of England, might I presume so far as to push my inquiries into their celebrated historians?

Alfieri. I would speak more confidently of them were I more a master of the language. But although an author's style may lose somewhat by transmission, it loses little in prose if it is good for anything: not so in poetry. Cicero and Machiavelli will always be masters of their own domain.

Metastasio. How different!

Alfieri. No translator can make them alike: the dress may be soiled a little, yet we recognise the wearer. I venture to assert that no work in prose, since the time of Titus Livius, is equal to Gibbon's *History.* There is somewhat of palatial magnitude and of oriental splendour in it; nothing disorderly, nothing overcharged. Hume and the others are hardly to be noticed for discrimination of character, for reflection, or for research. Hume, among many trifling essays, has written one upon *Miracles,* worth reading. Critic, I doubt whether at this time in Italy there is a worse than he.

Metastasio. He was thought a free-thinker: was he one?

Alfieri. Quite the contrary. A narrow ribbon tied him, neck and heels, to the hinder quarters of a broken throne. If you mean religion, I believe he was addicted to no formulary. His life was indolently and innocently Epicurean.

Metastasio. Doubtless he called it equanimity.

Alfieri. Equanimity is a virtue in philosophers; it is denounced as a crime in theologians. They, in their peculiar phraseology, call it *lukewarmness;* and lukewarmness in divinity they hold to be almost as insufferable as in venison.

Metastasio. Sects, we understand, are springing up daily in the British Iles, which ebullitions may serve ultimately as a counter-poison to the venom now polluting the atmosphere. Strange stories are reported of one Wesley, who is permitted by the authorities to preach in the open fields.

Alfieri. Were not those whom you most venerate permitted by the Pagan authorities to preach both in the fields and in the cities? Wesley gave out no new Commandments: he opened before the eyes

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of assembled thousands the small volume which contains them, and cried aloud, "*Read! Read!*" I know an Italian who would have spoken to them words of far different import in their own vernacular, and have said, "*If you dare to read, go and be damned.*" I am not highly fanatical, but I do bear veneration toward this saintly man, commanding by meekness and humility. He found the members of the Anglican Church putrescent, as Luther found the Papal; he used no knife or cautery.

Metastasio. Every wall of that Church is cracked in twenty places.

Alfieri. Sound foundations are better than ornamental buttresses. We see all things *in pejus ruere et retro sublapsa referri.* Our efforts are thus rendered the more necessary to climb up and surmount the cliffs that eternally crumble under us. We shall presently have more than shadows to contend against. The monkey-tiger is about to spring over the Alps.

Metastasio. Revolutionists invite it.

Alfieri. Rapid revolutions turn men giddy and blind. Did ever good come from that quarter? You will be cheated, robbed, plundered, torn piecemeal, and devoured. Mark my words: a century of misfortunes will confirm them. Wherever there are priests subordinate solely to a priest leader, there are snares and chains for all beyond the circle. If Piedemont falls, Italy falls: Venice will be what Naples is: and Rome will call Attila himself a beatific vision. Unhappy land of breathless hope! of enchanted heroism! of consecrated lies!

Metastasio. Attilas, and worse barbarians, if worse be any, may invade us; but I never will fear their violence. The gates of Hell, we are assured, shall not prevail against the chair of Saint Peter.

Alfieri. The gates of Hell will never try, if they know their own interest. They will stand wide-open as the gates on which the Roman artificer, in his jewelled slippers and three-storied bonnet, so cleverly modeled them.

Metastasio. Excuse me, Signor Conte! but is your Excellency quite so happy in the indulging of these asperities as you would be in the smoothing of them?

Alfieri. I doubt it. And now it is my turn to ask a question. Ought I to be satisfied if a road-maker fills the road with mud, then mends it with thorns and brushwood, and ultimately sets up a turn-

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pike at the end of it, and swings the gate in my face unless I pay him to let me pass through? We must not always think of what will make us most happy: we must excite the best energies of men, and controll the worst. I have no pleasure in spurring or whipping my horse, yet my horse must occasionally be whipt and spurred.

Metastasio. Yes, Signor Conte, but men are our fellow-creatures.

Alfieri. Not mine yet: I will do my best to make them so.

Metastasio. Religion alone can effect it: and I am afraid that the Anglican, although much sterner than the Roman-catholic, and consequently more congenial with your nature, has failed in its few attractions. Well, Signor Conte, we all have our opinions; some shut up in the closet, and some lying on the dressing-table. Mine I keep to myself, as I received them in baptism; and I am informed by my superiors that no discussion of them is profitable or pardonable.

Alfieri. There are no better judges of pardons and profits. If men do not know their own children, who upon earth shall point them out?

Metastasio. When a boon is bestowed on me I ask no questions.

Alfieri. Before I accept one I inquire whether it came fairly and honestly into the donor's hands; and it is not of the donor I ask the question.

Metastasio. The turbulence of France, now dangerous to the world, arises from irreligion.

Alfieri. And irreligion from false religion. Men are patient in the process of a cheat, impatient in the discovery: fools are refractory when they find themselves befooled: they shy at the first sparkle on the roadside, and swerve abruptly, and throw the rider out of the saddle.

Metastasio. Infallibility alone can show us distinctly what is false religion.

Alfieri. I think I myself have enough of infallibility for this demonstration. A harlot goes parading the streets at nightfall; invites you blandly to her embraces; shows you her house, in which every chamber has lighted lamps; if you enter, she makes you drunk and picks your pocket; if you refuse, she has a brawny bully in readiness, who knocks you down and drags you through the gutter.

Metastasio. Ah, Signor Conte! you have surely brought back with you from England some few prejudices. Nobody could ever have

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thought that your Excellency would become so strenuous a stickler for those vulgar men who call themselves methodists.

Alfieri. I care little about them personally, and would have willingly dropt the conversation relating to them. Surely if any man is impartial in regard to creeds, I am. I have no son to be educated for the church. But I should gladly have taken a walk with you in those fields where thousands were assembled round the methodist preacher. His enthusiasm warmed my heart; his eye lighted mine, from afar.

Metastasio. It rejoices me to hear that the stray sheep are entering the fold again.

Alfieri. May it be so! The apostols were pure and upright men, but they were more quarrelsome and less discreet than Wesley.

Metastasio. O fie!

Alfieri. I did not venture to say so, although I have their own words in confirmation of the fact. However, they who were ready to lay down their lives for their consciences are worthy of veneration: not so the impostors who assume their name and counterfeit their signature; who, instead of obeying the constituted laws, seize them into their own hands, and threaten with degradation the rulers of the people. Until these audacious upstarts, these revelers and rioters, are collared, stript of their mask and domino, and compelled to gain their bread honestly, revolutions will never cease.

Metastasio. Turbulence, if not revolution, must surely be the result of multitudinous and excited meetings.

Alfieri. Bees are the most turbulent while they are bringing honey to their cells. England seethes perpetually, but never boils over. In the neighbourhood of Bristol, and throughout the county of Cornwall, thousands and hundreds of thousands have been brought into sobriety from habitual drunkenness by the persuasion of one unbeneficed clergyman.

Metastasio. Unless he preached the orthodox he preached in vain.

Alfieri. Seeing he did not preach in vain, but to a good purpose, I presume he did preach the orthodox.

Metastasio. His hearers, Conte Alfieri, will soon grow weary and want support.

Alfieri. Probably enough. Knowing the convexity as well as the concavity of the world, I can not be ignorant that men are liable to slip down it. Be comforted: the old shepherd will come back to

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them before a century is over. He has vigilant dogs, and powerful ones, some broken in for leading a sheep by the ear, and others for dragging it by the throat. Men are gradually tired of being good; every one hates to be told how much better was his father. The fragments of the cross will be venerated, but the most saintly would be horrified at the miracle which should recompose it and set it up again.

Metastasio. Alas! we are weak mortals.

Alfieri. And knaves and liars too. If we have no opportunity of lying to another, we lie to ourselves; for lie we must. Detection is easy, but unsafe.

Metastasio. Trust in God.

Alfieri. In which? One says, *The kingdom of God is not of this world;* another says, *It is, and the crown is mine.* Let us hope that the afterpiece will be better than the serio-comic drama. The performers have been hissed off the stage deservedly. The boards are loose, the scenery faded; but the manager will engage his company for next season, and the leader of the orchestra will wave his fiddlestick as authoritatively as ever. Be of good cheer, abbate!

Metastasio. I am somewhat slow in the apprehension of allusions: but as your Excellency now refers to that branch of literature on which I have long been exercising my poor abilities, let me profit by your judgment, and, as far as you may deem me worthy, be made cognisant of your projects; I mean in regard to the *Order of Literary Merit* you are about to institute. I am afraid our Italian band of poets is neither so brilliant nor so numerous as you could wish. Casti is at the head of them. Philosophers and jurists are to be found both in the Neapolitan territory and in the Milanese; nor are we so deficient in historians.

Alfieri. I would admit the artists in sculpture and painting, for these are literary men in a universal language.

Metastasio. Have we any now living?

Alfieri. Painter none; but you who know Rome must know Canova. I have been favored by him with a sight of his designs. I know his Hebe, a graceful Italian girl; his Venus is French, an inmate of the *Palace Royal* or its vicinity. From the same quarter is a well-grown Dancing Woman, with her knuckles stuck against her hips, and her elbows at equal distances on each side, protruding

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sharply, in the form of a knotting-needle. But there is a design for a Lion so grand as would make Antiquity envious; such a lion as it is well for Hercules that he did not meet with at Nemæa; there would have been no Nemæan Games if he had.

Metastasio. Ah, Signor Conte! you praise as earnestly as you condemn.

Alfieri. I wish I could as often. However, I have not done yet. Beside my friend Canova, there are two foreners of great promise: one a Dane, the other an Englishman. If they should ever work in marble as ably as they design, they will get poisoned. I have seen no drawings, not even Raffael's, more pure and intellectual than theirs. I suspect their native countries will never be competent to form a just estimate of their merit. We may say of each, *utinam noster esses.*

Metastasio. The gentleman who acts as usher to the Countess was pointed out to me as the eminent portraitist who seems to have been ambitious and successful in regard to both. He has done justice to your Excellency.

Alfieri. And my Excellency will do justice to him. No Buck-goat, no gang of buck-goats, driven through Calabria in the month of August, ever exhaled to such a distance so virulent an odour. We know that painters use Egyptian mummies in their colours: he seems to have fallen on some in the condiment of which there is but little of myrrh and spikenard. I detest the French.

Metastasio. Nothing more evident. The amiable Countess seems to harbor no such hostility; too gentle and generous for antipathies.

Alfieri. I recommended to her this Fabre.

Metastasio. Evidently she feels the value of the recommendation. My visit, I fear, is too prolonged and grows tedious.

Alfieri. My dear Signor Abbate, what can possibly induce you to think it? Absence, as we call it, is among my failings. When I am alone I often speak aloud; a habit which perhaps I contracted in framing the parts of my tragedies. Tell me honestly if any words escaped me, for I am quite unconscious of having uttered a single one. Now tell me; do, pray.

Metastasio. None was uttered; a few broke through the closed barriers of the teeth. Doubtless, they will find their proper place in the drama you are meditating. The thought is delicate.

Alfieri. Do not let me lose it then.

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Metastasio. It was this, with a sigh and a sneer, *Her heart is too large for one occupant.*

Alfieri. Diavolo!

Metastasio. The character showed at one flash the indignant and the derisory.

Alfieri. We are all, more or less, somnambulists. Let us come upon our own ground again while our eyes are open and awake.

Metastasio. The Literary Order?

Alfieri. What think you of its practicability and success?

Metastasio. There is danger that the bench will be overturned by the scramble to reach the first seat. Every nation will rush forward with its own pretences. Latterly the Germans have high claims upon us.

Alfieri. In Germany the clouds of mysticism and of metaphysics are conflicting. The fire of poetry will never issue from the collision; fume, vapour, and rattle may. Abbate! you and I must not leave on the roadside the heroes of antiquity. Let marketmen in shaggy waistcoats and shining buttons, with potatoes and turnips in their carts, pass them by irreverently: we remember them in their better days, and never will disdain to stop before them and to converse with them.

Metastasio. The great English dramatist has brought together all ages and all nations.

Alfieri. He used the fragments of an old world in a new creation, and placed his own sun and stars above it.

Metastasio. Descending a little, do we not find Theseus a knight-errant and Othello a negro?

Alfieri. Theseus was a knight-errant in fact. If Shakespeare represented Othello as a black, he was led into his error by the compound English word *blackamoor*. He thought that the Moors, being Africans, must be black; whereas the Moorish gentleman (and gentlemen the Moors were superlatively) is of the same complexion as the Andalusian and Valencian. In like manner Queen Cleopatra is turned into a gypsey, because she reigned in Egypt; yet probably there are few ladies in the room over our heads fairer than the lady of Macedonian descent and pure blood. Macedonians were Highlanders; none dark, even of the men. Cleopatra, be sure, took care that her face should not be tanned. I doubt whether it ever was more exposed to the open air than when it was under the awning

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that Nymphs and Cupids held over her, casting a purple light on the Cydnus.

Metastasio. Shakespeare seems to have taken the character of Cleopatra, in part from that boisterous termagant who resided at Windsor Castle, and in part from the vagrants in its forest. I doubt whether in any he was so wide of the mark. There is no truth, imaginary or real or conventional, no discrimination, no interest, in any personage of that drama. Elizabeth herself would never have kicked her *lords in waiting*, or have dragged them by the hair about the room. Even George the Hanoverian would but have thrown his wig at them. Acknowledge that the French have at least the merit of avoiding such irregularities.

Alfieri. The French again! I thought we had thrown them overboard. I hate them for many things, and above the rest for making me a hater.

Metastasio. The malady is a grievous one, yet it is not quite incurable. Naturalists have taught us that the soil and climate in which are the worst poisons, animal and vegetable, bear also the plants that neutralise or assuage them. If I hated the French nation (God forbid that I should hate any!) I would run to Montaigne, to Lafontaine, to Molière: might not Montesquieu ransom the rest of his countrymen from *you?*

Alfieri. He thought as profoundly as Machiavelli, more generously, more grandly, and wrote perhaps as well. To sit in the quiet study of these men, is there any who would not willingly escape from the boys and adults playing at *hide-and-seek* in the grove of Academos, and pelting one another with handfuls of leaves and litter?

Metastasio. The style of both, as well as I can judge, is different from yours, although Machiavelli's comes nearest.

Alfieri. We do not want for common use what the ancients called eloquence: *non frons percussa, non femur.* To constitute a great writer the qualities are, adequate expression of just sentiments, plainness without vulgarity, elevation without pomp, sedateness without austerity, alertness without impetuosity; thoughts offered not abruptly, nor ungraciously, nor forced into us, nor stampt upon us: they must leave room for others to bring forward theirs, and help in suggesting them. Vigorous that appears to ordinary minds which attracts the vulgar by its curtness and violence: but coarse

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textures are not always the strongest, nor is the loudest voice always the most commanding.

Metastasio. Novels are the chief literature of the present age.

Alfieri. I do not regret it: they are the least tiresome kind of epic. They make us acquainted with many families which interest us; they bring neighbours to us who do not require us to return the visit, and who go away usually at a stated hour.

Metastasio. The English have lost many great novelists within few years. Smollet, rich in broad humour; Sterne, excelling in purity of style, geniality, and pathos; Fielding, an easy gentleman in all society, requiring no affectation, and never asserting his superiority. Looking at such prominent and pliant muscles, the foremost, most self-confident, and most popular, would decline a contest.

Alfieri. I would rather have lived a lifetime with him than have spent an evening with either of the others. You have not mentioned Richardson, author of *Grandison* and *Clarissa*. But I fear I have to apologize for interrupting you in your enumeration. *Grandison* might teach even Englishmen fine manners, and *Clarissa* might draw tears from them. But they think it manly to be rude, and womanly to be sensitive.

Metastasio. Italy will have her two great poets in her Roman afterbirth: England has had her two. The delightful are not always the great, else Ariosto and Tasso would be in the number.

Alfieri. True; neither of them is grand. Reduce the Iliad and Odyssea into prose, and they yet retain their indomitable vigour: but cut away the rhyme from Tasso and Ariosto and the succulent plant bleeds and shrivels. The volatile salt evaporates from the porcelain vase, and the roses, despite of the drugs kneaded into them, collapse.

Metastasio. The chalky cliffs of Albion contain but little moisture, and show none.

Alfieri. It is easier to get twenty oaths and curses from an Englishman than one tear: but there are hot springs at the center of his heart which bring forth perpetual fertility. He puts unhappiness down despotically, and will labor at doing good if you abstain from looking at him while he does it. Another English writer of novel or romance you might have mentioned; but I think you spoke only of those who are deceased. Horace Walpole, son of a prime minister in the last reign, has written a romance, *The Castle of Otranto*, and a disquisition on Richard the Third, entitled *Historical Doubts*. I

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knew him slightly. He was called *finical* by the English, which means over-delicate. Whatever were his manners and pursuits, and however much he had lived in French society, he studiously avoided the lean larding of their language. The reddle, which no Italian lady uses, but with which both the English and French besmear their faces, they both alike call *rouge*. Walpole, I observe, calls it *red*. Generally, to what is indelicate, and what it is desirable to conceal, the English without any maliciousness in this particular, give the French name.

Metastasio. False delicacy is real indelicacy. Half-educated men employ the most frequently circumlocutions and ambiguities. The plain vulgar are not the most vulgar. If there are any words which ought to be out of use, what they designate ought to be out of sight. A French duchess would not hesitate about an expression which the daughter of a convict in America might reprehend. Talking of French duchesses, a story now recurs to me of a very beautiful and virtuous one, and it related also to a personage of still higher rank, celebrated for courtly manners.

Alfieri. Let me hear it; for truly I know little of that higher rank.

Metastasio. I heard it whispered at court (and every court is a whispering gallery) that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales ventured on such discourse with the Duchess de Pienne, that she replied, '*Sir! it is princes like you who make democrats.*'

Alfieri. The story is true: I myself heard it from her intimate and inseparable friend the Duchess de Saux. He could act the polite man, but never without exaggeration: all was puffy and bloated in him, mind and body. For a time he was under the tuition of an actor; I do not mean a clerical, but a scenic one.

Metastasio. Your Excellency must have known him personally.

Alfieri. Not at all; I neither drink nor game. Sometimes I have met him in Hyde Park. My horses on such occasions always pranced and reared unmanageably, and galloped off. Once I was invited to Carleton House; but quinsey, at my prayer, came to my aid, and held me in my bed until the air of Bath relieved me. He was gross no less to ladies than to men, among whom there was none of sufficient spirit to inflict due chastisement. A true gentleman would rather shed his last blood, than bring any, hot with painful blushes, into the cheek of a virtuous woman. Well, we have occupied too

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much of our time about this eider-down bandaged bolster. Let us revert to men who will be holden in honour when he (if he is fortunate) will be forgotten. I doubt whether you quite approve of forming the Society I suggest.

Metastasio. Indeed, on the contrary, I should be happy to see it formed: I fear the difficulties.

Alfieri. What are they?

Metastasio. Flame attracts flame; but not always in love, nor often in literature. The *Society* will not be so numerous as that of the Forty in France, although the whole of Europe is open to it, and altho' the Arts and Sciences take their appointed seats. The band, however small, will contain its mutineers. Nation will not fight against nation with so much rancour and pertinacity as a part against another part of the same. Jealousies are not created at a distance; the French are self-sufficient; they will hold together contentedly; so may the Italians; but the Germans will rush into our literary domain as they have into our territorial; the English will join them against us. More of these are familiar with German than with Italian, and value that literature higher: for their estimation of authors is usually in proportion to the difficulty they have experienced in acquiring the language.

Alfieri. True: we are apt to value many things for what they have cost us, before we take the trouble of calculating their intrinsic worth. I have seen a young lady in England, and she was not very young either, who preferred the *Sorrows of Werter* to the *Vicar of Wakefield.*

Metastasio. Perhaps your projected Society might produce the good effect of diverting men's minds in Italy from the arena of politics now saturated with blood in France. If they continue to cut off heads by the sackful, their forests will be insufficient for the supply of sawdust to absorb all that is streaming from the scaffold.

Alfieri. Abbate! I enter into your feelings and walk in gloom among them.

Metastasio. Unjustly have your enemies called you ferocious and sanguinary.

Alfieri. No man is less so. Were I dictator or tribune, I would only give orders to lift up certain robes stiff with gold, and to inflict a few lashes, ten or a dozen, on what is too adipose for bloodshed. I know the value of able-bodied men, and the service I might render

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to their health by apportioning to them moderate work on the high-road. My native country, Piedemont, feeds more of such idlers than any other of the same dimensions: I would be the dancing-master of these dervishes. If we should ever have a prince of vigorous mind, he will be conscious of his power and learn the character of his people. They are as hardy as the Switzers, and more active. No modern nation, not even Sweden, has sent into the field more scientific generals or braver soldiers. She has produced a Eugene, she may produce a Cromwell, or even a Washington. God grant it! The very idea at a distance makes me pray.

Metastasio. I hope you often do, Signor Conte.

Alfieri. Thanksgiving is more devotional. How exultingly will I spring up for those matins!

Metastasio. Methinks I hear the company descending the stairs, and carriages rolling by. It is time I should make my bow to the Countess, and take leave. Gladly would I have spent a few more days in Florence. To-morrow is scarcely left for my visit to Santa Croce.

Alfieri. Do not stand too long before the monument of Galileo: remember, *the earth moves.*

Metastasio. I may venture to express to you my belief in this fact.

Alfieri. What! in defiance of Infallibility?

Metastasio. Infallibility sometimes winks, although she never slumbers. After Galileo, in due order, stand Buonaruoti and Machiavelli. The next generation (may it be the oldest of it!) will contemplate in the same church the noble features of Vittorio Alfieri.

Alfieri. Rather would I rest among my ancestors at Asti; but only when Piedemont is free. Neither in your time nor in mine can this happiness be expected. The French will render the name of freedom a mockery, evoking a phantom to frighten the prostrate Earth. But the Earth is heaving, and will not cease to heave. Italy, the most civilized, the most humane, the most inventive and enthusiastic, is not destined by Providence to be much longer subservient to Gaul or German. The bloom is upon the fruit while grubs are in the kernel, grubs generated and matured within the tree. Surely an end will be put to this before long. Have the laborious lived for the idle? Were valiant hearts intended for nothing but the pavement of processions? Some there are left unfallen.

Metastasio. I hope and trust you may see days more cheerful.

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Alfieri. No, I shall never see the consummation of my soul's desire. My life is closing. Private griefs (O shame! shame!) press upon and overlay public with me. When you come again to Florence, 'ask the verger on which side of Santa Croce lie the remains of Vittorio Alfieri.*

* Metastasio died a few years before the French Revolution.

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XXVII. MACCHIAVELLI AND GUICCIARDINI.

Guicciardini. It grieves me, Ser Niccolo, to learn by your letter that Fortune has been ungrateful and unjust to you. Hard is it that a statesman who hath served his country conscienciously and ably should be reduced so nearly to poverty.

Macchiavelli. The hardship, my compassionate friend, lies chiefly in the necessity of entreating as a favour what I believe to be my due. Having served our Florence faithfully, I claim only a small remuneration from the Medici.

Guicciardini. Gratitude is not in the vocabulary of princes: and Republics insist on every man's services, deeming him sufficiently paid for them by a place, however subordinate, in the government. You are become out of favour by writing what appears to be satirical in your *Principe*. Can you deny to me, who am your trusty and hearty friend, that, in this wise and profound work, you make it appear how such high functionaries, in order to acquire and retain their power, must act occasionally with violence and dishonesty?

Macchiavelli. Is it not true?

Guicciardini. And by being true is it not the more dangerous to him who utters and promulgates it?

Macchiavelli. I desired to show my countrymen what they must expect if they prefer an absolute prince to a free republic.

Guicciardini. All desires out of the domestic circle lead to disappointment, most of them to grief. Are we less tranquil than under the late regimen?

Macchiavelli. The sleeper is more tranquil than the wide-awake, and the dead even than he.

Guicciardini. It is somewhat for the generous, patriotic, and

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energetic, to have escaped persecution. After your commentary on Livy, I feared you might, notwithstanding all your caution and prudence, take up Tacitus. Then might you, peradventure, have been accused of personalities: Hemlock and Hellebore and other simples, sedatives prescribed for the unruly, are to be gathered in Tuscany.

Macchiavelli. Dante Alighieri, the glory of our country, dared openly to avow himself an innovator and reformer. He would have called in the Emperor of Germany to rule the whole of Italy.

Guicciardini. Were it practicable it might have been well for us. The vilest and most ineradicable of vermin is that which generates in the skin: we can sweep away the outlying.

Macchiavelli. No people can flourish where any man sets at defiance the magistrates and the laws. An appeal out of them is treason, and punishment should be summary and prompt. Beside a conclave of princes set over us by a priest, we, at present, lie ground between an upper and a nether millstone. Germany and France crush us into powder, and leave nothing but the husks. Better is it to be subject to the Emperor of Germany than to the King of France. For the German Powers would encourage our commerce through interest, the French through jealousy would repress it.

Guicciardini. It was impossible for the Emperor of Germany to become sovran of Italy, as Alighieri wished, and ventured to propose, unless by abolishing the temporal power of the Pope.

Macchiavelli. Republican as I am, I would willingly see all Italy under one constitutional hereditary prince. At present we have no choice between the bear and the wolf. The bear hugs to suffocation, breaks a few ribs, then, tearing out a mouthful, lies down. The wolf springs at the throat, strangles the animal, tears the heart out, and laps up the last drop of blood. Neither you nor I can speculate far into the future. Yet we both of us can see clearly what is about us and nigh. The French are incapable of freedom, and will never let others enjoy it. The Germans have as much liberty as they want or know what to do with. They are a moral people and sigh after the purity of religion. It appears to be an axiom with princes that the more corruptions there are in it the more easily are men governed. But under a good government a religion will gradually become good, and revolutions will be unnecessary. I do not believe that during our lifetime there will be any in this country. Yet who

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could have foreseen the prodigious one which has been lately almost accomplisht in the Netherlands? There are now living many men, and not extremely old, who remember Spain the most powerful and the most prosperous of kingdoms. What is she now become! England crushed her armado, and left her scarcely enough of its timbers for an auto da fé. Nearer to ourselves than the scene where Spain sank, never to rise again, the Hollanders are cooking their fish to-day over the splinters they have broken off from the old fisherman's chair, while the banners of Castile and Leon droop in ignominy over the Knights of the Garter.

Now to the matter of union and consolidation.

England could unite to her discordant kingdoms and divers races, speaking different languages. Is it indeed going too far in speculation that the provinces of Italy, both on the Peninsula and on the Adriatic, living in harmony and speaking in the same mother tongue, may become united?

Guicciardini. On such a consummation you, a republican, hardly can dream.

Macchiavelli. I do dream of it, and when I am most awake. My republicanism is for my country, not for my city. Florence was my cradle, Florence taught me my letters, but there were masters who made me hold up my head and walk with them beyond the gates.

Guicciardini. The nurse had well nigh shaken thee out of the cradle, and the masters have brought thee among thorns. We all have our projects, and generally on things farthest from our reach. The most accredited of philosophers often tread upon unsound ground. Never was a scheme less practicable than Plato's Republic, redundant with whims and puerilities. Did no obstruction lie in your path on your road to the consolidation of Italy? Did never the two rival cities, Genoa and Venice, rise up before you? Both of them are opulent and powerful: both would be more opulent and more powerful by going hand in hand.

Guicciardini. But Venice, whose nobility is higher than any other in Europe, would never take the ring off her finger. She is queen of the Adriatic, and arbitress of the Levant. Remembering that she hath often set at defiance both Emperor and Pope, she would receive any sovran, and most unwillingly one from across the Alps.

Macchiavelli. Never was any government so politic as hers hath continued to be from century to century, never any people so long

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contented. In other countries the nobles are the worst of slaves because they adulate the worst of masters. Flattery in Venice is no less exuberant, but the victorious admiral or the cherisht maiden are the flattered. Ariosto breathes his spirit into the gondoleer, by day and by night, and music swells above the ripples of the lagoon.

Guicciardini. Ser Niccolo, you are growing quite poetical.

Macchiavelli. Venice herself is poetry, and creates a poet out of the dullest clay. Woe betide the wretch who desecrates and humiliates her! She may fall, but she shall rise again.

Guicciardini. Our hopes at the present time must rest contentedly. It was impossible for the Emperor of Germany to become sole sovran of Italy, as Alighieri wished, abolishing the temporal power of the Pope. France and Spain are interested in maintaining it; that is, they are playing as partners, sitting on opposite sides of the table. If Italy is ever to be under one potentate, the only one eligible is the Duke of Savoy, he being already her guardian. Care, however, must be taken that his family never intermarry with the stranger. We have families in our own country more illustrious by exploits and wisdom than the Bourbons or the Hapsburgs, and if antiquity, as it seems to be, is considered a title to reverence, we have fifty more ancient. With other nations, if ours were united, we should require no alliances. They would only involve us in difficulties and wars.

Freedom of traffic is advantageous to all. When the seas are open man's eyes will open. We want little from abroad, and we shall want less. Our wines are richer than those of Spain, which usually taste of the pigskin or goatskin, and the best of the French owe their odour and flavour to the root of that lily which grows profusely in the crevices and on the summits of our city-walls. These roots we never use but for perfumery, and export them in quantities from Livorno. The wool of Taranto celebrated by Virgil in his Georgics, is less deteriorated than everything else in the Neapolitan territory. We might clothe our wealthier neighbours with it, as we do with our silks and velvets. Manufacturers of linen and lace would easily be tempted from the Netherlands. Sicily and Sardinia could produce not only a profusion of flax, but also of cotton. The island of Sardinia is scarcely a quarter peopled. Horace celebrates its "segetes feraces." There is in it a more extensive and a more fertile plain than perhaps in any other island.

Macchiavelli. Nothing can be hoped for where priests and monks

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swarm in all seasons. Other grubs and insects die down, these never do. Even locusts, after they have consumed the grain and herbage, take flight or are swept away, and leave no living progeny on the ground behind them. The vermin between skin and flesh are ineradicable.

Guicciardini. What can we do with the religious?

Macchiavelli. Teach them religion. Teach them to earn by labour the bread they eat. Some confraternities work already, make all do.

Guicciardini. Remember, there are aged and infirm in monasteries: to deprive them of a decent and comfortable subsistence as was done in England, would be inhumane, not to them only, but also to the poor wretches who lived by them.

Macchiavelli. It would be: but such a case might be obviated, by stationing them in their native towns and villages, where friends are living. The less afflicted may visit the sick and instruct the children: few of them can do more, or are willing to do so much. The bishops, out of their vast revenues, ought to supply whatever may yet be needful.

Guicciardini. Perhaps you would curtail their revenues and their number.

Macchiavelli. Jesus Christ ordained twelve to preach his gospel to all nations. Surely twice the number is sufficient for Italy. I would allow a spacious house and garden to each, and 2,000 crowns* annually from the public treasury. Sardinia and wild Corsica might also have each of them four prelates.

Guicciardini. Sardinia in another century could be what she was under the old Romans.

Macchiavelli. Religion in their time was no hinderer of labour, no encourager of idleness, no mendicant in purple and fine linen and a jewelled bonnet three stories high.

Another generation will see better things, another, but not the next.

Guicciardini. After the *Purgatorio* we arrive at the *Paradiso!* Vision! vision!

Macchiavelli. Holy visions are at last accomplished.

* 2,000 crowns at that time were equal to 5,000 now. The French Bishops have about £700, with houses in their cities, not palaces.

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XXVIII. MILTON AND MARVEL.

Marvel. Years have past over our heads, friend Milton, since the first conversation we held together on the subject of poetry. It was mainly, I think, if not entirely, on the dramatic. We will now exchange a few words, and more than a few if you are willing, on the other kinds of it. The desire was excited in me by your present of *Paradise Regained*, which I thanked you for by letter as soon as I had read it through, and I now, in person, thank you for it again.

Milton. Parents are usually the most fond of their last offspring, especially if the fruit of their declining years: I was of mine: I now hesitate.

Marvel. Be contented: you have fairly got the better of the Devil. There is little in either of your poems that the reader would wish out. This can not be said of the great Italian. Nearly all the characters in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* are wretches who excite no sympathy, and forward no action. Marking, page after page, the good, bad, and indifferent, I find scarcely a fifth part noted for reading a second time. This is not the case in the *Ilias*, the *Æneid*, the *Paradise Lost*.

Milton. The great poet of Italy, for great he was by intensity of thought and comprehension, constructed a hell and a purgatory for the accommodation of popes, prelates, and other dignitaries. Daring as he was, he was afraid of nearer fires than those below; hence a compendious satire he entitled a divine Comedy. Never was there so spacious a theatre with so many actors.

Marvel. Faith! it is a comedy in which the actors find no joke.

Milton. Alighieri wanted flexibility of muscle, and wore an iron mask: yet how warm are the tears which the lover of Beatrice shed

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over Francesca da Rimini and over the children of Ugolino! I would rather have written two such scenes than twenty such poems as the *Faery Queen*.

Marvel. Allegory grows tiresome: nevertheless, you have found, as I have heard you say, much to please you in Spenser. The heart, I confess it, is never toucht by him; and he does not excite even a light emotion.

Milton. He leads us into no walks of Nature. A poet must do that, or forfeit his right to a seat in the upper house.

Marvel. Grave as you are, and ever were, you have exprest to me your delight in the *Canterbury Tales*, and in him

who left untold
The story of Cambuscan bold.

Milton. Frequently do I read the *Canterbury Tales*, and with pleasure undiminisht.* They are full of character and of life. You would hardly expect in so early a stage of our language such harmony as comes occasionally on the ear; it ceases with the verse, but we are grateful for it, shortly as it stays with us.

Marvel. Happily you are now at leisure for a ramble in the open field of poetry, and to catch the Muses

Dancing in the checker'd shade.

Think what a pleasure it is to have landed at last, after all the perils of a tempestuous sea.

Milton. I would rather be on a tempestuous ocean than on a pestilential marsh, knowing that the one will grow calm, and that the other will not grow salubrious.

Andrew! we are sold like sheep, and we must not even bleat.

Marvel. What you have done, both in poetry and prose, was enough to startle the salesmen. Into your prose an irruption was often made by your poetry.

Milton. This is wrong. We should keep them distinct, however impetuous may be the loftier and the stronger.

Marvel. If you could have done it, we should have lost the

* A Bachelor of Arts, a Mr. Pycroft, without any authority, classes W. S. Landor with Byron and Wordsworth, as holding Chaucer cheap. Let this *Conversation* indicate the contrary. There is one Art, namely, the Ars poetica, in which the Bachelor is unlikely to take his Master's degree.

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grandest piece of harmony that ever was uttered from the heart of man.

Milton. Where is that?

Marvel. In your dissertation on Prelaty; it is this—

> When God commands to take the trumpet
> And blow a louder and a shriller blast,
> It rests not in Man's will what he shall do
> Or what he shall forbear.

Isaiah seems to be speaking.

Milton. The only resemblance is that Isaiah spoke also in vain. The deafest man can hear praise, and is slow to think any an excess. Friendship may sometimes step a few paces in advance of Truth; and who would check her? I had neither will nor power to break the imperious words that you cite, over-ruling my prose.

Marvel. Certainly they are not like the bleatings you have just now complained of. Your voice was never lowered to that key, my brave Milton.

Milton. I might not have retained what is left to me of it, were it not for your intercession.

Marvel. You over-rate my services. True, I did go to the Lord Chancellor, who knew me by name only, and who courteously said "*Mr. Marvel, I will see about it.*" You know what that phrase means, spoken by high officials. He went immediately, with feather in hat above his embroidered robes, to "see about" the house he is building, which is to overtop the Somersets and Northumberlands. Lucky dog, lawyer Hyde!

Neither much disappointed nor at all discomfited, but well knowing that no time was to be lost, I went forthwith to my Lord Rochester, who noticed me when he was a stripling. He never lookt so grave as when he heard me mention the cause of my visit. He turned his peruke half-round, and said "*My good Marvel! it is a ticklish thing.*" Without a moment's pause I replied, "Do you mean the halter, my Lord?" The peruke was again in the first position, with a pleasant smile on each side of its exuberant curls. Patting me on the shoulder, he said, "Well, well, Marvel! I do like a hearty friend, even in a quondam stickler to the old rebel Nol. Hangmanship is not a craft I would patronise. But master John Milton was bitter against us. He would even have set fire to the lawn sleeves, which I am in duty

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bound to reverence. But when the wicked man turneth away... you can go on with it; I may peradventure be at a fault.. I hope our gracious king has forgotten the sad catastrophe of his father. If he has not he may haply be reminded that John Milton had a hand in it, and then filial affection may, and indeed necessarily must, lead his Majesty toward the rope-walk. He hath so many cares of state, and is occupied in them so constantly and incessantly, that the occurrence in front of Whitehall shall have dropt out of his memory. Let us hope for the best." My reply was, "I will hope it, my Lord, from your known humanity and good temper. If my old friend receives no pardon from his most gracious sovran, he will be the only blind man that a gracious sovran ever helped to mount the gallows."

Whereat his Lordship broke into a peal of laughter, which stopt suddenly, and he said "Faith and troth! blind! stone blind! It would be too bad. Charley must keep the long cap folded up, in readiness for some fellow whose eyes require it. You saw my coach at the door. I was going for a private audience. I will mention the matter the first thing I do." He did, and you know the result.

Milton. The presbyterians are now more unfriendly to me than the episcopalians are.

Marvel. Their tempers are sourer, and they are more exasperated by the persecutions they are suffering. You have become calmer and milder. The best apples, rough when they are first gathered, grow richer in flavour late. There are zealots who complain that you are lukewarm.

Milton. It is better to be lukewarm than to boil over. My opinions in theology have undergone a change. What they are will be known hereafter; I have written them in Latin and I shall leave them behind me. For I would not anger any on this side of the grave. Resentment and controversy cool in the churchyard.

Marvel. There are temperate men in Italy, and perhaps elsewhere, so scandalized at the contests and cruelties of sects, that they almost doubt whether the death of the emperor Julian was not a calamity to the world, and whether what we call paganism was ever so uncharitable, in other words so unchristian, as some exclusive creeds.

Milton. Physicians propose to cure the effect of one poison by administering another. Presbyterianism twisted back the neck of Prelaty and poured a strong drastic down her throat. She kickt and

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screamed, and, when she got on her legs again, swore bitterly and called her servants to kick the intruders down stairs.

Marvel. The old religions on several accounts are better than the later. They are less profuse of foul language, they domineer less, and they cost less; they withdraw none from agriculture or home. The priests exposed no wares for sale, and they kept to their own temples and their own houses. I am no customer of those chapmen whose glass and crockery are so brittle as to draw blood if you break it. I side neither with the cropt nor the periwigged. I will never deal with the dealers in damnation, while I can hear cursing and swearing gratis in the stable-yard.

Milton. Men's curses are stored up for them in heaven.

Marvel. Lucky fellows if they can get up there and find anything better. May they not catch their own tost back to them waiting below?

Milton. Andrew! in sooth thou art a merry Andrew. Methinks thou knowest more about the poets than about the divines. Curious name! as if the study and profession of what relates to divinity made the man himself divine, as the study and profession of physic entitles one, and justly, to be called a physician.

Marvel. Now then, having had enough of both, I am ready to be as disputatious as the worst of them. I am about to find fault with you on the score of poetry.

Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angit.

Milton. After the sweet I am prepared for the bitter, which often happens in life, and it is only children who take the bitter first.

Marvel. Now for it. You were not a very young man when you wrote how

> Sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
> Warbled his native woodnotes wild.

After acknowledging the prettiness of the verses, I deny the propriety of the application. No poet was ever less a warbler of "woodnotes wild." In his earliest poems he was elaborate, and not exempt from stiff conceits, the fault of the age as exemplified by Spenser.

Milton. In his later he takes wing over the world, beyond human sight, but heard above the clouds.

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Marvel. His Muse, to be in the fashion of the day, wore a starcht ruff about her neck.

You have fringed Jonson's "learned sock." I never had patience to go through, or to speak more properly to *undergo*, his tragedies. In coarse comedy he succeeds better; but comedy ought never to be coarse. Indelicate as was Aristophanes, there was an easy motion and an unaffected grace in every step he took. Plautus comes far behind, and Terence not quite up to Plautus. Be not angry with me if Molière is my delight.

Milton. He has written since I was a reader; and there is nobody in the house who can pronounce French intelligibly. My nephew reads Latin to me; and he reminded me one day that Sir Philip Sidney tried his hand at turning our English into Latin hexameters. Some of the Germans have done likewise. English and German hexameters sound as a heavy cart sounds bouncing over boulders.

Marvel. We often find in them a foot composed of two short syllables, instead of a spondee, and a trochee as often, which reminds us of a cripple, one of whose legs is shorter than the other, so that he cannot put it to the ground. I doubt whether in a hundred English hexameters there are three composed of dactyl and spondee.*

Milton. I know not whether it ever has been observed that the final foot of the hexameter is a trochee. So it is, with only two or three exceptions, in Virgil where *mons*, and another monosyllable in another place, end the verse.

Marvel. Why can not we be contented with our own measures, as establisht by law and custom? None in Latin or Greek are more harmonious than several of them.

Milton. Fond as I am of Latin, and many as are the verses I have written in it, never was I so rash and inconsiderate as to force its meters into our own language, which is infinitely more capable of stops and variations.

Marvel. Not even the verses of Homer himself have that diversity

* Ovid was the first who subjected a strange language to Latin measures, and he acknowledges that he was ashamed of doing it.

Ah pudet! et Getico scripsi sermone libellum
Aptaque sunt nostris barbara verba modis.

Yet how would the philologist rejoice at the recovery of this *little book*, for a book there was of it, and not only one composition. The Jesuits, clever at Latin versification, have not yet introduced it into China.

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of cadence which enchants us in *Paradise Lost*. Who was the blockhead who invented the word *blank* for its verse? Never was any one less appropriate. The Latin hexameter, closing with a disyllable or, trisyllable, wants the variety of the Greek, and terminates too frequently with consonants, *ant*, *unt*, *am*, *um*, or *s*. To remove this obstruction from the sensitive ear we have recourse to Homer and Milton.

Milton. Courtier! courtier! prythee hold thy tongue. Venerate one blind man and continue to love the other.

SECOND CONVERSATION.

Milton. Happy am I to see you here again, after a travel of so many weeks, and through a country where the roads, in many parts, are deep and difficult.

Marvel. Truly since our late unhappy war they have been but little mended, and less before. The armies required a few of them to be rendered commodious for cannon and trains. How these were brought so far as to Kineton, and over Edge Hill, is wonderful.

Milton. Yet you went beyond, even to the Upper Severn. How was this feat performed?

Marvel. Pondering the difficulties on one side and the conveniences on the other, I bought a palfrey at Highgate. Wink as the dealer might at him and me, I really found him fairly worth the eight guineas he cost me. He carried me to Oxford by the next nightfall, or soon after. Both of us rose and rested early, and neither had to complain of our provender. At Oxford we rested a whole day, it being the Sabbath.

Milton. Virtuously and religiously done! Whether men sit idle and morose for lack of amusement, or whether they enjoy the day in innocent pleasure among their children and friends, I do no longer censure them, as I did formerly.

Marvel. Some lose their sourness by time, others become austere and crabbed. You once appeared too sedate, but never uncongenial.

Milton. I have seen reason to change some of my old habits and

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some of my old opinions. I fear I am morose by nature: certain I am that the waters of Castalia are sweeter than the waters of Styx, and that the study, not of philosophy alone, but equally of poetry, corrects our evil humours. Any interesting book overlays and bluntens asperity. Music, in which I always have delighted, both calms and elevates.

What are you waiting for, so seriously?

Marvel. To hear more truths from you.

Milton. You shall not, until you have reported to me somewhat more of your journey. As far as Edge Hill you have brought me, and no farther. Had the battle there been lost to us, the castle at Warwick would have suffered like its neighbour of Kenilworth, for the valiant Earl was the fast friend of Cromwell. Lord Brooke, as you remember, was killed by a shot from Lichfield minister by Dick Dyot, at the hall-door of Walter Noble in the close—his entrance had been watcht, and this fatal missive intercepted his return from the representative of the city.

Marvel. We could have better spared another brave man. Brooke would never have betrayed us. Now enough for politics, usually ending hopelesly, often dishonourably, where the sharper keeps the winning card under his ruffle.

You have endured my company as far as Oxford. Few walled cities are less capable of resisting a siege. It is commanded by Shotover Hill, and the Cherwell at a short distance is so narrow, and there are so many trees on its banks, that it might be bridged within sunset and sunrise, unperceived. I am certain that orders were given to abstain from bombarding the town lest the colleges might suffer.

Milton. Cathedrals were also spared, at the urgent instance of the Protector, hateful as was their service to the people at large. Westminster Abbey was under his guardian eye, and the towers of Windsor were left, for their beauty and their innocence in evil days.

Marvel. I wish you could have seen with me those of Warwick, and the more graceful, though less august of Kenilworth. Their roofs are indeed battered down, and the chambers of the whole edifice are now tenanted by owls and daws. However, the windows are intact. None are so beautiful as they. Had they been inserted in the castle at Warwick it would be unequalled in beauty, as its towers are in magnificence.

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Milton. Rous, and Camden, and lately Dugdale, have rendered that county highly interesting. Yet rather would I see the chancel at Stratford than even the tower of Babel, had it been standing, or even the window of the Ark. Wretches so worthless as Dudley could erect the towers of Kenilworth. Who cares about him? What human heart hath he ever warmed or moved? Thousands will throb, age after age, at the very sound of our poet's name.

I might be glad to see these two castles, if sight were vouchsafed me, but neither of them or any other, so gladly as Ludlow, now (like the more gorgeous of the two) dilapidated.

Marvel. I can easily believe it of you. It is an inheritance which you will bequeath to your country. The stones have fallen, but Comus stands above them, a warder who will never lose his office.

Milton. We look complacently on our earlier handywork. The best sculptor might haply be glad to find in a corner some fragment of a clay model on which his fingers were employed before the knuckles were well knitten.

I am not dissatisfied, on the whole, with my *Mask of Comus:* yet there the scholar in his gown stood in the poet's way. I represented a boy talking like a philosopher, when he never could have heard even the name. I have often been too scholastic: yet I never brought Adam and Eve into the trim grove of Academus. It is almost as difficult to avoid faults in poetry as to reach beauties; faults being multitudinous and lying under our feet in that quarter, attainable beauties few and over-head.

Your palfrey did not carry you to Ludlow?

Marvel. No, I stopt short; yet I saw Sabrina before she had put her yellow cloak on for the fair at Bristow: I saw her where she met her brighter spouse Avon, fresh from watering the flowers under the chancel at Stratford. Pig-headed knaves have defaced the sacred image it contains. Who knows but in another age they may violate the tomb, fearless of the recorded curse denouncing such a sacrilege.

Milton. It grieved me to see places of worship harmed in any sort. In the last century abbies and convents were demolished, as castles have been in ours. Never shall we or our children see such edifices as the abbies of Evesham and Malmsbury, and some others. More is remaining of the rites there celebrated than of the walls under which bows and curtsies were made in bedizened frocks to dolls and candles. Puffy lawn is substituted for gold lace, but palaces

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and manors stand where they stood. The church "mutavit dominos et tedit in altera jura": but milords are milords yet, and lawgivers, and offerers up of prayers for the murderers of nations. Glorious Reformation!

Will there never be a sanctuary in every private house? Will there never be a time when every mother will be the priestess of her children and family? Our duties are simple and learnt easily. No sunrise but awakens one or other of them into activity and growth. Boys are educated, girls are not; yet girls should be educated first, and taught the most impressively. These slender and graceful columns are not only the ornament, but also the support, of society. Men are the braver for the reverence they bear toward them, and in them do they find their reward. I would that our cathedrals were turned into schoolrooms for the more advanced among the youths in age and study, and I would never grudge the bishops, then masters and ushers, a stipend of three or four hundred pounds a-year, with a commodious house and garden for each. I live comfortably within one hundred, and, after my decease, my children will not be reduced to starvation.

Marvel. God forbid! but must they not work for their bread?

Milton. Verily and indeed must they: and this, O Andrew, is among His other blessings. He taught me the rudiments of my craft; they have learnt theirs. Those are happier who work for a family than those who work for a state. The poor have always their Commonwealth; we have lost even the name.

Marvel. Our most gracious king will take especial care that the people at large do not run riotous in wealth and be submerged in luxury. Perhaps, in the midst of his necessities, he may transfer the lawn sleeves to wearers on whom they would be more becoming, and of whom the most modest is a street-walking orange-girl.

Milton. Charles may properly be called a sapper and miner. He thinks our earlier Constitution is just as deserving of overthrow as our later. I know not whether he has sold his regalia, I only know that he has sold his country. What must we think of a king who barters his patrimony for protection, or who recurs to any but his own people for protection? Whenever the weak make an alliance with the strong they are the strong's dependents. A prudent nation will not permit its ruler to form a marriage with a foren potentate. There are daughters in England still worthy to wear a crown. A

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time there was, but it was a distant one, when feuds among the nobility would have exasperated the jealousy of most among them by the king's choice of a wife out of one baronial family. Such danger is now over. The heir to the throne is united to the daughter of a subject, a subject of mean family and powerless connections.

Such a peerage as is now patcht up will never stand between king and people as the old barons did, mainly, it is true, for their own ends. It grieves me that so many of their castles have been demolished. The ivy hath scarcely yet reacht the basement of Ludlow, and its longest eventide shadows fall short of the Severn below them. Cromwell has been called the destroyer of the most magnificent edifices: unjustly: the puritans were the carriers of this barbarous decree. The same ferocious men would have battered down the cathedrals. Our troopers did indeed stable their horses in some of them, ejecting idler and less serviceable cattle, and in several of them monuments were defaced. This was somewhat like tearing out a page from history, not indeed an important one, yet the deed was wanton mischief. Yet what is this in the sight of Wisdom and of our Creator if we compare it with the bloodshed of thousands, in one place, in one hour? Men march into the field of battle in stately trim and after joyous music, and slay thousands to gratify one, the only one whom it would be innocent to slay. He who commands them to break God's image should experience God's vengeance where he has committed the offence. War will never cease, or long subside, while such creatures are permitted to exist. If two men quarrel and fight in the highway, there are many who come up and interpose; can none be found to act likewise in a wider field? Are there to be no restrictions on sturdier disturbers of the peace?

Marvel. Here I am quite in accord with you. Every parish should unite, and surround and hunt down the marauders, most Christian, Catholic, and Apostolic, cage them, and exhibit them in the marketplace.

Italy has been parcelled out, bartered, and exchanged. I would treat them as they have treated the Italians, and as we do to other thieves and murderers, I would not draw and quarter them, but rather leave them whole in their deformity. Iron should hold what oaths could not. Italy, formed to be the Eden of the earth, is now torn to pieces by the bear and the monkey. In another age the beautiful Venice, which has flourished for the greater part of a thousand years,

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which is longer than any city ever did before, may peradventure be the prey of one barbarian—and be sold to another. Her people, the best governed and the happiest, may be made discontented by some crowned Jack Cade, and then handcuffed by their deliverer.

Milton. No Demosthenes is living now.

Marvel. While England was England there existed one, one only; let me grasp his hand.

Milton. Prythee, sit down; let me be proud, but never vain. Demosthenes was superlatively μεγα κυδος Αχαιων. Cicero was weaker in a weaker cause. He arraigned one powerful plunderer, but he left in his audience no few nearly as criminal. However, let not our admiration of so great a man fall off from him. He lived among and consorted with those, equally well educated as himself, who received a high gratification from the sight of their fellow creatures torn peacemele by wild beasts in the amphitheater. The Romans were never quite civilized or quite humanized. Even at this day the worship of a mother with an innocent babe, in her arms or at her breast, awakes no tenderness in them; they stab one another on the church-steps as they leave her. The wolf nurtured more than one couple.

Marvel. It is remarkable that the northern nations are less cruel and sanguinary than the southern. Where the air is keenest, it seems, the religion is purest.

Milton. Idleness looks toward easy gods and pardoners for pence. Popery will never flourish in Sweden and Norway, or the Gospel be preached openly, or even tolerated, in Rome. The followers of Christ must take refuge in the catacombs, among their elder brethren.

Marvel. Fashions change perpetually. I should not wonder if, in the next reign, a slip from the robe of the scarlet lady becomes the general wear, instead of the magpie plumage now fluttering in churches.

Milton. There may also be candles on what is called the *Communion-table* by protestants and *Altar* by papists, to commemorate the last supper of our Lord. Candles are unnecessary by daylight; and it was by daylight that our blessed Lord broke his last bread with his disciples. The principal meal, which the Romans called *cœna*, was taken before nightfall, as we may learn from Catullus, Horace, Petronius, and many others. The *Hall of Apollo*, in the house of Lucullus, was not lighted up when Cicero was invited to his table; and no lamp shone down on the guests of Nasidienus.

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Marvel. Recurring to the Romans, it appears to me that the earlier cookt a dinner as badly as the later a religion. Some of their *receits* have been preserved. I would never have taken Apicius into my service at five farthings a day.

Milton. Culinary may be called the lowest of the arts, yet men are slow and long in acquiring it. Wild men paint and carve the images of animals long before they have learnt to fry an omelet.

I know not what has brought us down into the kitchen.

Marvel. The fault must have been mine. We were talking of castles and abbeys and cathedrals, and the lords of them in their several degrees. We began with what is high and have descended to what is low. It is difficult to find "from this lowest depth a lower depth."

Milton. "Raccende il gusto il mutar esca," says Ariosto: and the words are very applicable. An imaginary line may be drawn between Conversation and Dialogue. In Conversation, as in the country, variety is pleasant and expected. We look from the ground before us into the remoter, and much of more than one quality lies between. In Conversation we ought not to be didactic, in Dialogue we may be: Galileo has done it. There are other authorities, but none so great.

I must now come back homeward from Italy.

If in the next or any remoter age our country should produce a sound historian, who holds up his head above his party, and sees clearly and widely, will he be believed when he records what we have witnessed within the last few years? It will be called a traveller's *story*. Already a *story* is become a synonome for a *lie*. Herodotus, the most instructive of historians, when he relates a marvellous tale of some occurrence in a far country, gives it us as a report: how will our forthcoming writers manage what shall have fallen into their hands from their father's, the eyewitness? Will they believe that a drop of Saxon blood is in their veins?

Marvel. Now you are speaking of history, let me express a wish that you had leisure or inclination to continue that which you began. Our own times do indeed seem as fabulous as the earlier. Did it never occur to you that many of us partake of the Roman? that, although the legions had left Britain, many of the inhabitants, and especially the settlers on the coast, descended from the invader?

Milton. Doubtless in three centuries there must have been a large intermixture of the races. London was somewhat of a mercantile

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city and indeed an emporium, long before its occupation by the Romans. Tyre sent her merchants to the south of Ireland, and probably to the south of Britain, certainly to the west. An oyster was a bait to a Roman; the rocks about our island were covered with them, while those on the Italian were scarce and worthless. Certainly few merchants would abandon their habitations when the legionaries left the land. Their ships were manned by the hardy sailors of the north, and the capital (as we call it) invested in them belonged in great measure to settlers from abroad, principally Roman, where it was safer than in their own city, where imperial purple was the merchandise, soldiers the salesmen and auctioneers.

We are a miscellaneous volume, the leaves well sewed together, Roman, Norwegian, Dane, Saxon, chapter after chapter.

Marvel. It seems to me likely, that, when the Roman military were recalled they were prohibited from their usual rapine, and the wealthier townsmen took refuge in their ships. Many if not most of these were of half-breed. In Warwickshire I saw a lock of black hair, which had been taken from a tomb containing the bones of a Norman, buried in it within half a century of the invasion. There could scarcely have been time for an intermixture of Neustrian and Saxon. The Jutlanders and other Northerns were chiefly the crews of the wealthy Neustrian merchants, and soon were joined by their landsmen, who made several descents and occupied at last the whole country.

Milton. Here is likelihood without record; for the bowmen and swordsmen were no penmen. At the Conquest there were flocks of them. Ravens find food after battles. It is worthy of a thought and a reflection that a lock of hair, such as what you mention, should remain unchanged in colour and substance when body, bones, and brains, had become earth. Thus it often happens that the vile outlasts the valuable; and what is shorn off and thrown away is gathered up and treasured. Gentlemen are usually proud of Norman origin: none can prove unbroken in three generations: Dane and Saxon are interlopers. The absurd pretenders would go up higher if they knew how, and would thank you if you told and persuaded them that they quite as certainly had some particle of the Roman in them after so many crosses. The Northmen were as valiant as the Romans, and greatly more capable of true civilization. They never sent into the arena the bravest men to be devoured by wild beasts or to slaughter

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one another, as the most civilized of the Romans did, age after age. They worshipt false Gods; what people has not? and how few are there who do not even now? But their priests were not hucksters of souls, nor covered sins with wafers. They never called their hearers *sheep*, and fleeced them as if they were. They never taught their fellow men that it was a duty or a privilege to kiss their toes, or that the seat was holy which they had squatted on. As they could not write, they could not forge wills had they been so minded.

Marvel. I dare not follow where chemists are so expert in pharmacy. Even our own country bears hemlock and hensbane. We may walk more safely among the sticklers for antiquity of lineage, who probably have never learnt by heart the verse of that poet who, with all his levity, has more unobtrusively sage verses than any, be he Roman or Athenian.—

> Genus et proavos et quæ non fecimus ipsi
> Vix ea nostra voco.

Ulysses is here represented as the speaker, characteristically and worthily.

Milton. We are all of the earth, earthly. They who are proud of family antiquity ought to be ashamed of beating a dog, who, we are certified, is of older creation. Probably the worms are of older still. Happily they are deaf and dumb; if they had ears and tongues they would never so misapply them as we often do. We shall soon lie in the midst of them as quiet and mute as they are. We cause the bloodshed one of another, and often go far afield to chase the unoffending. The greediest worms are guiltless of the like; they only exact what is their inheritance; we must pay them the debt we owe them; let it be unreluctantly!

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XXIX. MARTIN AND JACK.

[Lord Peter, Martin, and Jack, brought the people much about them in a disturbance long ago. Lord Peter, the proudest, most intolerant, most exclusive, of his order, suddenly grew condescending and bland. Martin had little confidence in this demonstration; so little indeed that he ordered the locksmith to alter the locks of his cellar and larder, well knowing that, however different in stature and features, there was a marvellous family-likeness in appetite and quickness of digestion. Jack, whose house was smaller, was contented with a cellar of proportionate dimensions; and, if you only sent him a simple calf's head toward the close of January, cared little for any other delicacy of the larder. When Peter spoke to him, which was seldom, he pretended that he was ignorant of his language, and avowed that neither father nor mother had taught it to any of their children. Martin had caught a few words of it from Peter, and was somewhat fond of displaying his acquisition. Jack, who kept aloof from both brothers, was more scandalized at Martin. At last, taciturn as was his nature, he zealously burst forth in this brotherly expostulation.]

Jack. Brother Martin, friends we have met, whatever were our feuds formerly, and friends, in God's name, let us part. We have been somewhat too much given to the holding forth of long discourses; and perhaps I, in this particular, have been the more censurable of the two. Let me now come to the point and have done with it. I always knew that Peter was an impostor and a bastard: I always knew he was neither our father's son nor our mother's son. Had he been, would he ever have attempted to strangle us in our cradles? Would he not rather have helped us in our sickness and infirmity? would he not rather have fed us with pure fresh milk and unfermented bread in it? would he not rather have taken us by the hand, and guided our tottering steps, patiently and cautiously? Instead of which, he blew out the rush-light, because it was *only* a rush-light; he set fire to our cribs, and burnt us cruelly.

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Martin. I have heard all this story from our nurse; but, Jack! Jack! thou wert always a froward child.

Jack. Too true, brother! but age hath sobered and softened me: I trust it continues to render me, day by day, a little more like our father. If this aspiration be too high, if this expression be too presumptuous, permit me to correct it, and only to say that, as I advance in life, I do heartily hope, I do anxiously desire, that my steps be more prone and more direct toward him.

Martin. Give me thy hand, brother Jack! This is manly; this is true-hearted.

Jack. Can you then bear questioning and reproof, brother?

Martin. Not very well, as you know, my old boy. But come; let me try; out with it; out at once.

Jack. Martin! Martin! the hottest air taints and corrupts our viands no more certainly, nor more intimately, nor more perniciously, than the lukewarm. So is it, my brother, with the sustenance of the spirit. I have lived where the flocks are scattered and healthy, and where the life of the shepherd is innocent and laborious. You have been spending your days where there is no true shepherd at all, and where the crowded fold is a sad congestion of ordure, scab, and foot-rot. You are grown angry, I hear, at certain new impertinences of the proud bastard whom you never have ventured to disclaim as brother. Shall I reveal to you the secret of this anger?

Martin (yawning). With all my heart.

Jack. Indifferent as usual! Well then; continue this indifference until the close of our conversation. The audacious bastard, who dared to spit in our father's face when he forbade any to call him *lord*, sees many of his spawn grown recently, from wriggling black little tadpoles, into party-coloured, puffy, croaking frogs; and he claims the whole fat marsh for his own property. The neighbouring lords assumed the livery of our Lord Peter, and imitated his voice and bearing. But no sooner had he laid claim to the whole fat marsh, and had driven into it their cattle for his own use, than they raised an outcry throughout the land.

Martin. Methinks it was time, brother Jack.

Jack. Brother Martin! it was time long before. The dissolute old bastard collected those spies and assassins who had, even when nations were thought to be less civilized, been driven forth from every kingdom. He now stocks every kingdom with them again, and

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mounts every throne with them vicariously. Well do I remember the time, my brother, when I reproved you for a tendency to what is called philosophy. It is true, you laught in my face: certainly you will never laugh in it again for any similar reproof. If priests there must be, let them keep their proper station: let the king have his palace, not the priest. When you have assigned to the endowment of schools the many millions which pamper your hierarchs, those burly bellies, swaying some one way, some another, then, Martin, we shall meet in brotherly love, and shall say (what I wish we could say sooner, instead of the contrary), "This is verily God's work, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Martin. There is only one set of men in Europe who are avowedly adverse to the propagation of knowledge, aware that the propagation of knowledge is adverse to their dominion. My friends, I am sorry to say it, are almost as much given to lying as these are. Both parties call themselves *catholic*, which neither is. Nor indeed, my dear Jack, between ourselves, is it desirable that either should be. Every sect is a moral check on its neighbour. Competition is as wholesome in religion as in commerce. We must bid high for heaven; we must surrender much; we must strive much, we must suffer much; we must make way for others, in order that in our turn we may succeed. There is but one guide: we know him by the gentleness of his voice, by the serenity of his countenance, by the wounded in spirit who are clinging to his knees, by the children whom he hath called to him, and by the disciples in whose poverty he hath shared.

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XXX. TIZIANO VECELLI AND LUIGI CORNARO.

Cornaro. Many are the years, Tiziano, since we were youths together here in Venice; and I believe that at the present hour we are nearly the oldest of its inhabitants. You indeed are somewhat the younger of the two; not much; although the present autumn is about the fiftieth since the truest judges gave you the preference over Giovanni Bellini; and after that time you surpassed even greater competitors. Your age hath far outstript your youth.

Tiziano. Ah, Don Luigi! even on the verge of fourscore the ear grows not deaf to flattery. I am charmed by your remembrance and your praises.

Cornaro. What! after those of kings and emperors?

Tiziano. I am far, very far, from indifferent to those commendations which have been bestowed on me by the masters of mankind, who happen in our times to be endowed with better judgment, regarding the higher Arts, than the noblest of their subjects. Yet a name which adorns the annals of our republic, a Cornaro, may, without ingratitude toward them, be quite as dear to me.

Cornaro. The emperor Charles is more generous to artists than to sovrans, although he had the magnanimity to admire in a rival as great a man as himself. But preëminently shone his magnanimity, when he loaded with jewelry and chains and crosses of gold the artist who had depicted the prostration of Austria, in the memorable field of Cadore. This I firmly believe to be the greatest work that Italian art ever achieved.

Tiziano. Of mine it certainly is the greatest.

Cornaro. Yet how wonderful is the Saint Peter Martyr! In both pictures you have proved yourself the best adapter of external nature

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to human and superhuman action. The majestic trees, at the stroke of your pencil, rise up worthy to shade the angels in their walks on earth. Many of your subjects were the productions of your hand after the meridian of life.

Tiziano. Long after. My fancy flies often from our sea-girt city to my native hills of Cadore, and over the intermediate plains and vineyards and olive-plots and chesnut-groves and forests, and inhales the sharp sunniness of the Alpine air: it invigorates me afresh.

Cornaro. Yes, Tiziano! Age never droops into decrepitude while Fancy stands at his side. To how many have you given an existence for centuries! For centuries, did I say? I should have said *for ever.* Successions of engravers will fix upon imperishable metal the lineaments you have deemed worthy of preservation. Canvas may decay, colours may fade; but these artists, animated by your genius, will follow one another through the darkest ages. These are the officers of your household.

Cursores, vitai lampada tradunt.

The time will come, perhaps within a few centuries, when the chief glory of a Venetian noble will be the possession of an ancestor by the hand of Tizianó.

Tiziano. You greatly overvalue me. There are many in our city who deserve to partake in these eulogies; and many others who followed my steps, and have preceded me to the tomb.

Cornaro. It belongs to a generous mind to be well pleased with its likeness in its inferiors: you can bear it even in a rival: you waft away your own praises, and often point toward Urbino.

Tiziano. Urbino is richer than Tyre and Sidon ever were: Urbino is more glorified than Troy and Rome. There is only one to whom the Virgin hath confided her Infant: one only to whom the Infant hath manifested his mother; he leans on her bosom; but she hath not all his love. Nearer to us, while we are conversing on this favourite of heaven, on this purifier of the human heart, on this inspirer of the most tender and most true religion, is Antonio Allegri of Correggio. Angels play with his pencil; and he catches them by the wing and will not let them go. What a canopy hath he raised to himself in the Dome at Parma! The highest of the departed and of the immortal are guardians of his sepulcher: he deserved it.

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Cornaro. And deserves he little, deserves he less, who raiseth his fellow men, lower by nature, to almost the same elevation? Can the Venetian Senate ever be extinct while it beholds the effigies of those brave, intelligent, and virtuous men, whom you have placed in their ancestral palaces? There they are seated, or there they stand, according to your disposal and ordinance, the only sovran, the only instructed, the only true nobility in Europe. When I have been contemplating the gravity and grandeur of their countenances, and meet afterward a German or Frenchman, I acknowledge the genus, but doubt the species: I perceive that I have left the master, and recognise the groom or lackey.

Tiziano. Glorious is indeed our Italy; and worthy is especially our Venice, of her wide dominion, her long existence, her imperishable renown.

Cornaro. The wisdom and the valour which have raised her to this eminence, above all the nations of the world, are best commemorated by you. We have industrious and faithful historians; but History is not always a safeguard against ingratitude and neglect. Now let the most negligent, let the most ungrateful, walk in our galleries, and his eyes will open a passage to his heart. Thanks to Tiziano!

Tiziano. Peace! peace! too generous Don Luigi! I have scarcely done justice to several of our senators.

Cornaro. You have added fresh nobility to the noblest of them, fresh beauty to the most beautiful of their wives and daughters.

Tiziano. Let me confess it frankly: I myself do experience no slight pleasure in looking at them. You smile, Don Luigi. Do you fancy I am liable to be led back into temptation?

Cornaro. Temptations, whether of insane ambition, or any lighter, if lighter there be any, are unlikely to draw us two astray, so near the grave as we are. Monumental brass will shine for ages over yours; mine will be just as appropriate under the hospitable turf of Padua. I do not wonder that at this season of life you retrace your first steps toward the images you have animated. Our Creator, when he visited for the last time the Paradise he had planted, went not thither at mid-day, but in the cool of evening. Manifest once more to the beautiful pair formed by Him after His own image, moved He, the Uncreated, casting no shadow.

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IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

DIALOGUES OF FAMOUS WOMEN.

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DIALOGUES OF FAMOUS WOMEN.

I. QUEEN ELIZABETH AND CECIL.

Elizabeth. I advise thee again, churlish Cecil, how that our Edmund Spenser, whom thou callest most uncourteously, a whining whelp, hath good and solid reason for his complaint. God's blood! shall the lady that tieth my garter and shuffles the smock over my head, or the lord that steadieth my chair's back while I eat, or the other that looketh to my buck-hounds lest they be mangy, be holden by me in higher esteem and estate, than he who hath placed me among the bravest of past times, and will as safely and surely set me down among the loveliest in the future?

Cecil. Your Highness must remember he carouseth fully for such deserts . . . fifty pounds a-year of unclipt monies, and a butt of canary wine; not to mention three thousand acres in Ireland, worth fairly another fifty and another butt, in seasonable and quiet years.

Elizabeth. The monies are not enow to sustain a pair of grooms and a pair of palfreys, and more wine hath been drunken in my presence at a feast. The monies are given to such men, that they may not incline nor be obligated to any vile or lowly occupation; and the canary, that they may entertain such promising Wits as court their company and converse; and that in such manner there may be alway in our land a succession of these heirs unto Fame. He hath written, not indeed with his wonted fancifulness, nor in learned and majestical language, but in homely and rustic wise, some verses which have moved me; and haply the more, inasmuch as they demonstrate to me that his genius hath been dampened by his adversities. Read them.

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Cecil.

How much is lost when neither heart nor eye
Rosewinged Desire or fabling Hope deceives;
When boyhood with quick throb hath ceased to spy
The dubious apple in the yellow leaves;

When, rising from the turf where youth reposed,
We find but deserts in the far-sought shore;
When the huge book of Faery-land lies closed,
And those strong brazen clasps will yield no more.

Elizabeth. The said Edmund hath also furnished unto the weaver at Arras, John Blanquieres, on my account, a description for some of his cunningest wenches to work at, supplied by mine own self indeed as far as the subject-matter goes, but set forth by him with figures and fancies, and daintily enough bedecked. I could have wished he had thereunto joined a fair comparison between Dian . . . no matter . . . he might perhaps have fared the better for it . . . but poets' wits, God help them! when did they ever sit close about them! Read the poesy, not over-rich, and concluding very awkwardly and meanly.

Cecil.

Where forms the lotus, with its level leaves
And solid blossoms, many floating isles,
What heavenly radiance swift descending cleaves
The darksome wave! unwonted beauty smiles

On its pure bosom, on each bright-eyed flower,
On every nymph, and twenty sate around.
Lo! 'twas Diana . . from the sultry hour
Hither she fled, nor fear'd she sight or sound.

Unhappy youth, whom thirst and quiver-reeds
Drew to these haunts, whom awe forbade to fly!
Three faithful dogs before him rais'd their heads,
And watched and wonder'd at that fixed eye.

Forth sprang his favourite . . with her arrow-hand,
Too late the goddess hid what hand may hide,
Of every nymph and every reed complain'd,
And dashed upon the bank the waters wide.

On the prone head and sandal'd feet they flew . .
Lo! slender hoofs and branching horns appear!
The last marr'd voice not e'en the favourite knew,
But bay'd and fasten'd on the upbraiding deer.

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Far be, chaste goddess, far from me and mine
The stream that tempts thee in the summer noon!
Alas that vengeance dwells with charms divine . .

Elizabeth. Psha! give me the paper: I forewarned thee how it ended . . . pitifully, pitifully.

Cecil. I cannot think otherwise than that the undertaker of the aforecited poesy hath choused your Highness; for I have seen painted, I know not where, but I think no farther off than Putney, the identically same Dian, with full as many nymphs, as he calls them, and more dogs. So small a matter as a page of poesy shall never stir my choler nor twitch my purse-string.

Elizabeth. I have read in Plinius and Mela of a runlet near Dodona, which kindled by approximation an unlighted torch, and extinguished a lighted one. Now, Cecil, I desire no such a jetty to be celebrated as the decoration of my court: in simpler words, which your gravity may more easily understand, I would not from the fountain of Honour give lustre to the dull and ignorant, deadening and leaving in its tomb the lamp of literature and genius. I ardently wish my reign to be remembered: if my actions were different from what they are, I should as ardently wish it to be forgotten. Those are the worst of suicides, who voluntarily and propensely stab or suffocate their fame, when God hath commanded them to stand on high for an example. We call him parricide who destroys the author of his existence: tell me, what shall we call him who casts forth to the dogs and birds of prey its most faithful propagator and most firm support? Mark me, I do not speak of that existence which the proudest must close in a ditch, the narrowest too of ditches and the soonest filled and fouled, and whereunto a pinch of ratsbane or a poppyhead may bend him; but of that which reposes on our own good deeds, carefully picked up, skilfully put together, and decorously laid out for us by another's kind understanding: I speak of an existence such as no father is author of, or provides for. The parent gives us few days and sorrowful; the poet many and glorious: the one (supposing him discreet and kindly) best reproves our faults; the other best remunerates our virtues.

A page of poesy is a little matter: be it so: but of a truth I do tell thee, Cecil, it shall master full many a bold heart that the Spaniard cannot trouble; it shall win to it full many a proud and flighty one that even chivalry and manly comeliness cannot touch.

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I may shake titles and dignities by the dozen from my breakfast-board; but I may not save those upon whose heads I shake them from rottenness and oblivion. This year they and their sovran dwell together, next year they and their beagle. Both have names, but names perishable. The keeper of my privy-seal is an earl: what then! the keeper of my poultry-yard is a Cæsar. In honest truth, a name given to a man is no better than a skin given to him: what is not natively his own falls off and comes to nothing.

I desire in future to hear no contempt of penmen, unless a depraved use of the pen shall have so cramped them, as to incapacitate them for the sword and for the council-chamber. If Alexander was the great, what was Aristoteles who made him so? and taught him every art and science he knew, except three; those of drinking, of blaspheming, and of murdering his bosom-friends. Come along: I will bring thee back again nearer home. Thou mightest toss and tumble in thy bed many nights, and never eke out the substance of a stanza: but Edmund, if perchance I should call upon him for his counsel, would give me as wholesome and prudent as any of you. We should indemnify such men for the injustice we do unto them in not calling them about us, and for the mortification they must suffer at seeing their inferiors set before them. Edmund is grave and gentle: he complains of Fortune, not of Elizabeth, of courts, not of Cecil. I am resolved, so help me God, he shall have no further cause for his repining. Go, convey unto him those twelve silver spoons, with the apostles on them, gloriously gilded; and deliver into his hand these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom. Beside which, set open before him with due reverence this Bible, wherein he may read the mercies of God toward those who waited [in patience] for his blessing; and this pair of crimson silk hose, which thou knowest I have worn only thirteen months, taking heed that the heel-piece be put into good and sufficient restoration, at my sole charges, by the Italian woman nigh the pollard elm at Charing-cross.

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II. ROGER ASCHAM AND LADY JANE GREY.

Ascham. Thou art going, my dear young lady, into a most awful state; thou art passing into matrimony and great wealth. God hath willed it: submit in thankfulness.

Thy affections are rightly placed and well distributed. Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a high degree, is inspired by honour in a higher: it never reaches its plenitude of growth and perfection but in the most exalted minds. Alas! alas!

Jane. What aileth my virtuous Ascham? what is amiss? why do I tremble?

Ascham. I remember a sort of prophecy, made three years ago: it is a prophecy of thy condition and of my feelings on it. Recollectest thou who wrote, sitting upon the sea-beach the evening after an excursion to the Isle of Wight, these verses?

> Invisibly bright water! so like air,
> On looking down I feared thou couldst not bear
> My little bark, of all light barks most light,
> And look'd again, and drew me from the sight,
> And, hanging back, breath'd each fresh gale aghast,
> And held the bench, not to go on so fast.

Jane. I was very childish when I composed them; and, if I had thought any more about the matter, I should have hoped you had been too generous to keep them in your memory as witnesses against me.

Ascham. Nay, they are not much amiss for so young a girl, and there being so few of them, I did not reprove thee. Half an hour, I thought, might have been spent more unprofitably; and I now shall believe it firmly, if thou wilt but be led by them to meditate a little

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on the similarity of situation in which thou then wert to what thou art now in.

Jane. I will do it, and whatever else you command; for I am weak by nature and very timorous, unless where a strong sense of duty holdeth and supporteth me. There God acteth, and not his creature.

Those were with me at sea who would have been attentive to me if I had seemed to be afraid, even though worshipful men and women were in the company; so that something more powerful threw my fear overboard. Yet I never will go again upon the water.

Ascham. Exercise that beauteous couple, that mind and body, much and variously, but at home, at home, Jane! indoors, and about things indoors; for God is there too. We have rocks and quicksands on the banks of our Thames, O lady, such as ocean never heard of; and many (who knows how soon!) may be engulfed in the current under their garden-walls.

Jane. Thoroughly do I now understand you. Yes indeed, I have read evil things of courts; but I think nobody can go out bad who entereth good, if timely and true warning shall have been given.

Ascham. I see perils on perils which thou dost not see, albeit thou art wiser than thy poor old master. And it is not because Love hath blinded thee, for that surpasseth his supposed omnipotence; but it is because thy tender heart, having always leant affectionately upon good, hath felt and known nothing of evil.

I once persuaded thee to reflect much: let me now persuade thee to avoid the habitude of reflection, to lay aside books, and to gaze carefully and stedfastly on what is under and before thee.

Jane. I have well bethought me of my duties: O how extensive they are! what a goodly and fair inheritance! But tell me, would you command me never more to read Cicero and Epictetus and Plutarch and Polybius? The others I do resign: they are good for the arbour and for the gravel-walk: yet leave unto me, I beseech you, my friend and father, leave unto me for my fireside and for my pillow, truth, eloquence, courage, constancy.

Ascham. Read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy child-bed, on thy death-bed. Thou spotless undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well. These are the men for men: these are to fashion the bright and blessed creatures whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom. Mind thou thy husband.

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Jane. I sincerely love the youth who hath espoused me; I love him with the fondest, the most solicitous affection; I pray to the Almighty for his goodness and happiness, and do forget at times, unworthy supplicant! the prayers I should have offered for myself. Never fear that I will disparage my kind religious teacher, by disobedience to my husband in the most trying duties.

Ascham. Gentle is he, gentle and virtuous: but time will harden him: time must harden even thee, sweet Jane! Do thou, complacently and indirectly, lead him from ambition.

Jane. He is contented with me and with home.

Ascham. Ah Jane! Jane! men of high estate grow tired of contentedness.

Jane. He told me he never liked books unless I read them to him: I will read them to him every evening: I will open new worlds to him richer than those discovered by the Spaniard: I will conduct him to treasures, O what treasures! on which he may sleep in innocence and peace.

Ascham. Rather do thou walk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his everything that love and poetry have invented; but watch him well; sport with his fancies; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheek; and if ever he meditate on power, go toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse.

Teach him to live unto God and unto thee; and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.

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III. HENRY VIII. AND ANNE BOLEYN.

Henry. Dost thou know me, Nanny, in this yeoman's dress? 'S blood! does it require so long and vacant a stare to recollect a husband after a week or two? No tragedy-tricks with me! a scream, a sob, or thy kerchief a trifle the wetter, were enough. Why, verily the little fool faints in earnest. These whey faces, like their kinsfolk the ghosts, give us no warning. (*Sprinkling water over her.*) Hast had water enough upon thee? take that then . . . art thyself again?

Anne. Father of mercies! do I meet again my husband, as was my last prayer on earth! do I behold my beloved lord . . . in peace . . . and pardoned, my partner in eternal bliss! It was his voice. I can not see him . . . why can not I? O why do these pangs interrupt the transports of the blessed!

Henry. Thou openest thy arms: faith! I came for that: Nanny, thou art a sweet slut:* thou groanest, wench: art in labour?

* Henry was not unlearned, nor indifferent to the costlier externals of a gentleman; but in manners and language he was hardly on a level with our ostlers of the present day. He was fond of bear-baitings and other such amusements in the midst of the rabble, and would wrestle with Francis I. His reign is one continued proof, flaring and wearisome as a Lapland summer day, that even the English form of government, under a sensual king with money at his disposal, may serve only to legitimatize injustice. The Constitution was still insisted on, in all its original strength and purity, by those who had abolished many of its fundamental laws, and had placed the remainder at the discretion of the king. It never has had a more zealous advocate than Empson. This true patriot of legitimacy requested on his trial, that, "if he and Dudley were punished, it might not be divulged to other nations, lest they should infer that the final dissolution of the English government was approaching."

The government was whatever the king ordered; and he a ferocious and

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Faith! among the mistakes of the night, I am ready to think almost that thou hast been drinking, and that I have not.

Anne. God preserve your highness: grant me your forgiveness for one slight offence. My eyes were heavy; I fell asleep while I was reading; I did not know of your presence at first, and when I did I could not speak. I strove for utterance; I wanted no respect for my liege and husband.

Henry. My pretty warm nestling, thou wilt then lie! Thou wert reading and aloud too, with thy saintly cup of water by thee, and . . . what! thou art still girlishly fond of those dried cherries!

Anne. I had no other fruit to offer your highness the first time I saw you, and you were then pleased to invent for me some reason why they should be acceptable. I did not dry these: may I present them, such as they are? We shall have fresh next month.

Henry. Thou art always driving away from the discourse. One moment it suits thee to know me, another not.

Anne. Remember, it is hardly three months since I miscarried;* I am weak and liable to swoons.

Henry. Thou hast however thy bridal cheeks, with lustre upon them when there is none elsewhere, and obstinate lips resisting all impression: but now thou talkest about miscarrying, who is the father of that boy?

Anne. The father is yours and mine; he who hath taken him to his own home, before (like me) he could struggle or cry for it.

Henry. Pagan, or worse, to talk so! He did not come into the world alive: there was no baptism.

Anne. I thought only of our loss: my senses are confounded. I

terrific thing, swinging on high between two windy superstitions, and caught and propelled alternately by Fanaticism and Lust. In Anne Boleyn, the frank and unsuspicious gaiety of her temper, the restless playfulness of high spirits, which we often saw formerly in the families of country gentlemen, first captivated the affections and afterward raised the jealousy of Henry. Lightness of spirit, which had made all about her happy the whole course of her life, made her so the last day of it. She was beheaded on the 19th of May, and Henry on the morrow married Jane Seymour.

* She miscarried of a son January the twenty-ninth, 1536: the King concluded from this event that his marriage was disagreeable to God. He had abundance of conclusions for believing that his last marriage was disagreeable to God, whenever he wanted a fresh one, and was ready in due time to give up this too with the same resignation; but he never had any *conclusions* of doing a thing disagreeable to God when a divorce or decapitation was in question.

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did not give him my milk, and yet I loved him tenderly; for I often fancied, had he lived, how contented and joyful he would have made you and England.

Henry. No subterfuges and escapes. I warrant, thou canst not say whether at my entrance thou wert waking or wandering.

Anne. Faintness and drowsiness came upon me suddenly.

Henry. Well, since thou really and truly sleepedst, what didst dream of?

Anne. I begin to doubt whether I did indeed sleep.

Henry. Ha! false one . . . never two sentences of truth together . . . but come, what didst think about, asleep or awake?

Anne. I thought that God had pardoned me my offences, and had received me unto him.

Henry. And nothing more?

Anne. That my prayers had been heard and my wishes were accomplishing: the angels alone can enjoy more beatitude than this.

Henry. Vexatious little devil! she says nothing now about me, merely from perverseness . . . Hast thou never thought about me, nor about thy falsehood and adultery?

Anne. If I had committed any kind of falsehood, in regard to you or not, I should never have rested until I had thrown myself at your feet and obtained your pardon: but if ever I had been guilty of that other crime, I know not whether I should have dared to implore it, even of God's mercy.

Henry. Thou hast heretofore cast some soft glances upon Smeaton; hast thou not?

Anne. He taught me to play on the virginals, as you know, when I was little, and thereby to please your highness.

Henry. And Brereton and Norris, what have they taught thee?

Anne. They are your servants, and trusty ones.

Henry. Has not Weston told thee plainly that he loved thee?

Anne. Yes; and . . .

Henry. What didst thou?

Anne. I defied him.

Henry. Is that all?

Anne. I could have done no more if he had told me that he hated me. Then indeed I should have incurred more justly the reproaches of your highness: I should have smiled.

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Henry. We have proofs abundant: the fellows shall one and all confront thee . . . ay, clap thy hands and kiss my sleeve, harlot!

Anne. O that so great a favour is vouchsafed me! my honour is secure; my husband will be happy again; he will see my innocence.

Henry. Give me now an account of the monies thou hast received from me within these nine months: I want them not back: they are letters of gold in record of thy guilt. Thou hast had no fewer than fifteen thousand pounds in that period, without even thy asking; what hast done with it, wanton?

Anne. I have regularly placed it out to interest.

Henry. Where? I demand of thee.

Anne. Among the needy and ailing. My lord archbishop has the account of it, sealed by him weekly:* I also had a copy myself: those who took away my papers may easily find it, for there are few others, and they lie open.

Henry. Think on my munificence to thee; recollect who made thee. Dost sigh for what thou hast lost?

Anne. I do indeed.

Henry. I never thought thee ambitious; but thy vices creep out one by one.

Anne. I do not regret that I have been a queen and am no longer one; nor that my innocence is called in question by those who never knew me: but I lament that the good people who loved me so cordially, hate and curse me; that those who pointed me out to their daughters for imitation, check them when they speak about me; and that he whom next to God I have served with most devotion, is my accuser.

Henry. Wast thou conning over something in that dingy book for thy defence? Come, tell me, what wast thou reading?

Anne. This ancient chronicle. I was looking for some one in my own condition, and must have missed the page. Surely in so many hundred years, there shall have been other young maidens, first too happy for exaltation, and after too exalted for happiness: not perchance doomed to die upon a scaffold, by those they ever

* The Duke of Norfolk obtained an order that the Archbishop of Canterbury should retire to his palace of Lambeth on the Queen's trial. Burnet, very sharp-sighted on irregularities in ladies, says that she had distributed, in the last nine months of her life, between fourteen and fifteen thousand pounds among the poor; a sum equal in value to nearly five times the amount at present. It tends to prove how little she could have reserved for vanities or favourites.

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honoured and served faithfully: that indeed I did not look for nor think of: but my heart was bounding for anyone I could love and pity. She would be unto me as a sister dead and gone, but hearing me, seeing me, consoling me, and being consoled. O my husband, it is so heavenly a thing . . .

Henry. To whine and whimper, no doubt, is vastly heavenly.

Anne. I said not so: but those, if there be any such, who never weep, have nothing in them of heavenly or of earthly. The plants, the trees, the very rocks and unsunned clouds, show us at least the semblances of weeping: and there is not an aspect of the globe we live on, nor of the waters and skies around it, without a reference and a similitude to our joys or sorrows.

Henry. I do not remember that notion anywhere. Take care no enemy rake out of it something of materialism. Guard well thy empty hot brain: it may hatch more evil. As for those odd words, I myself would fain see no great harm in them, knowing that grief and frenzy strike out many things, which would else lie still, and neither spirt nor sparkle. I also know that thou hast never read anything but bible and history, the two worst books in the world for young people, and the most certain to lead astray both prince and subject. For which reason I have interdicted and entirely put down the one, and will (by the blessing of the Virgin and of holy Paul) commit the other to a rigid censor. If it behoves us kings to enact what our people shall eat and drink, of which the most unruly and rebellious spirit can entertain no doubt, greatly more doth it behove us to examine what they read and think. The body is moved according to the mind and will: we must take care that the movement be a right one, on pain of God's anger in this life and the next.

Anne. O my dear husband! it must be a naughty thing indeed that makes him angry beyond remission. Did you ever try how pleasant it is to forgive anyone? There is nothing else wherein we can resemble God perfectly and easily.

Henry. Resemble God perfectly and easily! Do vile creatures talk thus of the Creator?

Anne. No, Henry, when his creatures talk thus of him, they are no longer vile creatures! When they know that he is good they love him, and when they love him they are good themselves. O Henry! my husband and king! the judgments of our Heavenly Father are righteous: on this surely we must think alike.

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Henry. And what then? speak out: again I command thee, speak plainly: thy tongue was not so torpid but this moment. Art ready? must I wait?

Anne. If any doubt remains upon your royal mind of your equity in this business; should it haply seem possible to you that passion or prejudice, in yourself or another, may have warped so strong an understanding, do but supplicate the Almighty to strengthen and enlighten it, and he will hear you.

Henry. What! thou wouldst fain change thy quarters, ay?

Anne. My spirit is detached and ready, and I shall change them shortly, whatever your highness may determine. Ah! my native Bickling is a pleasant place. May I go back to it? Does that kind smile say *yes?* Do the hounds ever run that way now? The fruit-trees must be all in full blossom, and the gorse on the hill above quite dazzling. How good it was in you to plant your park at Greenwich after my childish notion, tree for tree, the very same as at Bickling! Has the hard winter killed them? or the winds loosened the stakes about them?

Henry. Silly child! as if thou shouldst see them any more.

Anne. Alas! what strange things happen! But they and I are nearly of the same age; young alike, and without hold upon anything.

Henry. Yet thou appearest hale and resolute, and (they tell me) smirkest and smilest to everybody.

Anne. The withered leaf catches the sun sometimes, little as it can profit by it; and I have heard stories of the breeze in other climates, that sets in when daylight is about to close, and how constant it is, and how refreshing. My heart indeed is now sustained strangely: it became the more sensibly so from that time forward, when power and grandeur and all things terrestrial were sunk from sight. Every act of kindness in those about me gives me satisfaction and pleasure, such as I did not feel formerly. I was worse before God chastened me; yet I was never an ingrate. What pains have I taken to find out the village-girls who placed their posies in my chamber ere I arose in the morning! how gladly would I have recompensed the forester who lit up a brake on my birthnight, which else had warmed him half the winter! But these are times past: I was not queen of England.

Henry. Nor adulterous, nor heretical.

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Anne. God be praised!

Henry. Learned saint! thou knowest nothing of the lighter, but perhaps canst inform me about the graver of them.

Anne. Which may it be, my liege?

Henry. Which may it be, pestilence! I marvel that the walls of this tower do not crack around thee at such impiety.

Anne. I would be instructed by the wisest of theologians: such is your highness.

Henry. Are the sins of the body, foul as they are, comparable to those of the soul?

Anne. When they are united they must be worst.

Henry. Go on, go on: thou pushest thy own breast against the sword: God hath deprived thee of thy reason for thy punishment. I must hear more; proceed, I charge thee.

Anne. An aptitude to believe one thing rather than another, from ignorance or weakness, or from the more persuasive manner of the teacher, or from his purity of life, or from the strong impression of a particular text at a particular time, and various things beside, may influence and decide our opinion; and the hand of the Almighty, let us hope, will fall gently on human fallibility.

Henry. Opinion in matters of faith! rare wisdom! rare religion! Troth! Anne, thou hast well sobered me. I came rather warmly and lovingly; but these light ringlets, by the holy rood, shall not shade this shoulder much longer. Nay, do not start; I tap it for the last time, my sweetest. If the church permitted it, thou shouldst set forth on thy long journey with the eucharist between thy teeth, however loth.

Anne. Love your Elizabeth, my honoured lord, and God bless you! She will soon forget to call me: do not chide her: think how young she is.*

* Elizabeth was not quite three years old at her mother's death, being born the seventh of September, 1533.

It does not appear that the Defender of the Faith brought his wife to the scaffold for the good of her soul, nor that she was pregnant at the time, which would have added much to the merit of the action, as there is the probability that the child would have been heretical. Casper Scioppius, who flourished in the same century, says in his *Classicum Belli Sacri* that the children of heretics should not be pardoned, lest, if they grow up, they be implicated in the wickedness of their parents, and perish eternally.

Literature and Religion seem to have been contending two hundred years

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Could I, could I kiss her, but once again! it would comfort my heart . . . or break it.

unintermittingly, which of them should be most efficient in banishing humanity and civility from the world; the very things which it was their business to propagate and preserve, and without which they not only are useless but pernicious. Scioppius stood as bottle-holder to both, in their most desperate attacks. He, who was so munificent to children, in little faggots, little swords, and little halters, gave also a Christmas-box to James I. "*Alexipharmacum regium felli draconum et veneno aspidum, sub Philippi Mornæi de Plessis nuperâ papatûs historiâ abdito, appositum, et serenissimo Domino, Jacobo Magnæ Britanniæ regi, strenæ Januariæ loco, muneri missum.*" From the inexhaustible stores of his generosity he made another such present. "*Collyrium Regium, Britanniæ regi, graviter ex oculis laboranti, muneri missum.*" Sir Henry Wootton, who found him in Madrid, to requite him for his Christmas-box and box of eye-salve, ordered him to be whipt without a metaphor: on which Lavanda says, "Quid Hispane calleat Scioppius haud scio; si quid tamen istius linguæ in ipso fuit, tunc opinor exseruit maxime quando in Hispaniâ Anglice vapulavit." The remedies of Henry were less fallible, and his gifts more royal.

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IV. BENIOWSKI AND APHANASIA.

Aphanasia. You are leaving us! you are leaving us! O Maurice, in these vast wildernesses are you then the only thing cruel!

Beniowski. Aphanasia! who, in the name of Heaven, could have told you this?

Aphanasia. Your sighs, when we met at lesson.

Beniowski. And may not an exile sigh? Does the merciless Catharine, the murderer of her husband, does even she forbid it? Loss of rank! of estate, of liberty, of country . . .

Aphanasia. You had lost them, and still were happy. Did not you tell me that our studies were your consolation, and that Aphanasia was your heart's content?

Beniowski. Innocence and youth should ever be unsuspicious.

Aphanasia. I am then wicked in your eyes! Hear me! hear me! It was no suspicion in me. Fly, Maurice! fly, my beloved Maurice! my father knows your intention . . fly! fly!

Beniowski. Impossible! how know it? how suspect it? Speak, my sweet girl! be calm.

Aphanasia. Only do not go while there is nothing under heaven but the snows and sea. Where will you find food? who will chafe your hands? who will warn you not to sleep lest you should die? and whose voice, can you tell me, will help your smiles to waken you? Maurice, dear Maurice, only stay until the summer: my father will then have ceased to suspect you, and I may learn from you how to bear it. March, April, May . . three months are little . . you have been here three months . . one faggot's blaze! Do promise

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me. I will throw myself on the floor, and ask my good kind father to let you leave us.

Beniowski. Aphanasia! are you wild? My dearest girl, abandon the idea! You ruin me; you cause my imprisonment, my deprivation of you, my death. Listen to me: I swear to do nothing without you.

Aphanasia. O yes; you go without me.

Beniowski. Painfullest of my thoughts! no; here let me live, here, lost, degraded, useless; and Aphanasia be the witness of nothing but my ignominy. O God! was I born for this! is mine a light to set in this horizon!

Aphanasia. I do not understand you: did you pray? May the saints of heaven direct you! But not to leave me!

Beniowski. O Aphanasia! I thought you were too reasonable and too courageous to shed tears: you did not weep before: why do you now?

Aphanasia. Ah why did you read to me, once, of those two lovers who were buried in the same grave?

Beniowski. What two? there have been several.

Aphanasia. Dearest, dearest Maurice! are lovers then often so happy to the last? God will be as good to us as to any; for surely we trust in him as much. Come, come along: let us run to the sea the whole way. There is fondness in your sweet compassionate face; and yet I pray you do not look! O do not look at me; I am so ashamed. Take me, take me with you! let us away this instant. Loose me from your arms, dear Maurice; let me go; I will return again directly. Forgive me! *but* forgive me! do not think me vile! You do not; I know you do not, now you kiss me.

Beniowski. Never will I consent to loose you, light of my deliverance! Let this unite us eternally, my sweet espoused Aphanasia!

Aphanasia. Espoused! O blessed day! O light from heaven! I could no longer be silent; I could not speak otherwise. The seas are very wide, they tell me, and covered with rocks of ice and mountains of snow for many versts, upon which there is not an aspin or birch or alder to catch at, if the wind should blow hard. There is no rye, nor berries, nor little birds tamed by the frost, nor beasts asleep: and many days, and many long stormy nights, must be endured upon the waves, without food. Could you bear this quite alone?

Beniowski. Could *you* bear it, Aphanasia?

Aphanasia. Alone I could not.

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Beniowski. Could you with me? Think again; we both must suffer.

Aphanasia. How can we, Maurice! shall not we die together? Why do you clasp me so hard?

Beniowski. Could you endure to see, hour after hour, the deaths and the agonies of the brave? How many deaths! what dreadful agonies! The fury of thirst, the desperation of hunger! To hear their bodies plunged nightly into the unhallowed deep . . but first, Aphanasia, to hear them curse me as the author of their sufferings, the deluder of an innocent and an inexperienced girl, dragging her with me to a watery grave, famished and ghastly, so lovely and so joyous but the other day! O my Aphanasia! there are things which you have never heard, never should have heard, and must hear. You have read about the works of God in the creation.

Aphanasia. My father could teach me thus far: it is in the Bible.

Beniowski. You have read "In his image created he Man."

Aphanasia. I thought it strange, until I saw you, Maurice!

Beniowski. Strange then will you think it that Man himself breaks this image in his brother.

Aphanasia. Cain did, and was accursed for it.

Beniowski. We do, and are honoured; dishonoured if we do not. This is yet distant from the scope of my discourse. You have heard the wolves and bears howl about our sheds?

Aphanasia. O yes; and I have been told that they come upon the ice into the sea. But I am not afraid of them: I will give you a signal when they are near us.

Beniowski. Hunger is sometimes so intolerable, it compels them to kill and devour one another.

Aphanasia. They are violent and hurtful creatures; but that shocks me.

Beniowski. What, if men did it!

Aphanasia. Merciful Redeemer! You do not mean devour each other!

Beniowski. Hunger has driven men to this extremity. You doubt my words: astonishment turns you pale: paler than ever.

Aphanasia. I do believe you . . Was I then so pale? I know they kill one another when they are not famished; can I wonder that they eat one another when they are? The cruelty would be less even without the compulsion; but the killing did not seem so strange to me, because I had heard of it before.

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Beniowski. Think! our mariners may draw lots for the victim, or may seize the weakest.

Aphanasia. I am the weakest: what can you say now? O foolish girl to have spoken it. You have hurt, you have hurt your forehead! Do not stride away from me thus wildly! do not throw back on me those reproaching, those terrifying glances! Have the sailors no better hopes of living, strong as they are, and accustomed to the hardships and dangers of the ocean?

Beniowski. Hopes there are always.

Aphanasia. Why then do you try to frighten me with what is not and may not ever be? why look as if it pained you to be kind to me? Do you retract the promise yet warm upon your lips? Would you render the sea itself more horrible than it is? Am I ignorant that it has whirlpools and monsters in its bosom; and storms and tempests that will never let it rest; and revengeful and remorseless men, that mix each other's blood in its salt waters, when cities and solitudes are not vast enough to receive it. The sea is indeed a very frightful thing: I will look away from it: I protest to you I never will be sad or frightened at it, if you will but let me go with you. If you will not, O Maurice, I shall die with fear; I shall never see you again, though you return . . and you will so wish to see me! For you will grow kinder when you are away.

Beniowski. O Aphanasia! little know you me or yourself!

Aphanasia. While you are with me, I know how dearly I love you: when you are absent I can not think it half, so many sighs and sorrows interrupt me! And you will love me very much when you are gone! Even this might pain you: do not let it! No! you have promised: 'twas I who had forgotten it, not you.

How your heart beats! These are your tears upon my hair and shoulders.

Beniowski. May they be the last we shall mingle!

Aphanasia. Let me run then and embrace my father: if he does not bless me, you ought not.

Beniowski. Aphanasia, I will not refuse you even what would disunite us. Let me too stay and perish!

Aphanasia. Ah my most tender, most confiding father! must you then weep for me, or must you hate me!

Beniowski. You shall meet again; and soon perhaps. I promise it. The seas will spare us. He who inspires the heart of Aphanasia, will preserve her days.

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V. BOSSUET AND THE DUCHESS DE FONTANGES.*

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, it is the king's desire that I compliment you on the elevation you have attained.

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I know very well what you mean. His Majesty is kind and polite to everybody. The last thing he said to me was, "Angélique! do not forget to compliment Monseigneur the bishop on the dignity I have conferred upon him, of almoner to the dauphiness. I desired the appointment for him, only that he might be of rank sufficient to confess you, now you are duchess. Let him be your confessor, my little girl. He has fine manners."

Bossuet. I dare not presume to ask you, mademoiselle, what was your gracious reply to the condescension of our royal master.

Fontanges. O yes you may. I told him I was almost sure I should be ashamed of confessing such naughty things to a person of high rank, who writes like an angel.

Bossuet. The observation was inspired, mademoiselle, by your goodness and modesty.

Fontanges. You are so agreeable a man, monseigneur, I will confess to you, directly, if you like.

Bossuet. Have you brought yourself to a proper frame of mind, young lady?

Fontanges. What is that?

Bossuet. Do you hate sin?

Fontanges. Very much.

* The Abbé de Choisy says that she was "*belle comme un ange, mais sotte comme un panier.*"

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Bossuet. Are you resolved to leave it off?

Fontanges. I have left it off entirely since the king began to love me. I have never said a spiteful word of anybody since.

Bossuet. In your opinion, mademoiselle, are there no other sins than malice?

Fontanges. I never stole anything: I never committed adultery: I never coveted my neighbour's wife: I never killed any person: though several have told me they should die for me.

Bossuet. Vain, idle talk! did you listen to it?

Fontanges. Indeed I did, with both ears; it seemed so funny.

Bossuet. You have something to answer for then.

Fontanges. No, indeed I have not, monseigneur. I have asked many times after them, and found they were all alive: which mortified me.

Bossuet. So then! you would really have them die for you?

Fontanges. O no, no . . but I wanted to see whether they were in earnest or told me fibs: for if they told me fibs I would never trust them again. I do not care about them; for the king told me I was only to mind *him*.

Bossuet. Lowest and highest, we all owe to his Majesty our duty and submission.

Fontanges. I am sure he has mine: so you need not blame me or question me on that. At first, indeed, when he entered the folding-doors, I was in such a flurry I could hear my heart beat across the chamber: by degrees I cared little about the matter: and at last, when I grew used to it, I liked it rather than not. Now, if this is not confession, what is?

Bossuet. We must abstract the soul from every low mundane thought. Do you hate the world, mademoiselle?

Fontanges. A good deal of it: all Picardy for example, and all Sologne: nothing is uglier . . and, oh my life! what frightful men and women!

Bossuet. I would say, in plain language, do you hate the flesh and the devil?

Fontanges. Who does not hate the devil? If you will hold my hand the while, I will tell him so . . I hate you, beast! There now. As for flesh, I never could bear a fat man. Such people can neither dance nor hunt, nor do anything that I know of.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle Marie-Angélique de Scoraille de Rousille,

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duchesse de Fontanges! do you hate titles and dignities and yourself?

Fontanges. Myself! does any one hate me? why should I be the first? Hatred is the worst thing in the world: it makes one so very ugly.

Bossuet. To love God, we must hate ourselves. We must detest our bodies if we would save our souls.

Fontanges. That is hard: how can I do it? I see nothing so detestable in mine: do you? To love is easier. I love God whenever I think of him, he has been so very good to me: but I can not hate myself, if I would. As God hath not hated me, why should I? Beside, it was he who made the king to love me; for I heard you say in a sermon that the hearts of kings are in his rule and governance. As for titles and dignities, I do not care much about them while his Majesty loves me, and calls me his Angélique. They make people more civil about us; and therefore it must be a simpleton who hates or disregards them, and a hypocrite who pretends it. I am glad to be a duchess. Manon and Lisette have never tied my garter so as to hurt me since, nor has the mischievous old La Grange said anything cross or bold: on the contrary, she told me what a fine colour and what a plumpness it gave me. Would not you be rather a duchess than a waiting-maid or a nun, if the king gave you your choice?

Bossuet. Pardon me, mademoiselle, I am confounded at the levity of your question.

Fontanges. I am in earnest, as you see.

Bossuet. Flattery will come before you in other and more dangerous forms: you will be commended for excellencies which do not belong to you: and this you will find as injurious to your repose as to your virtue. An ingenuous mind feels in unmerited praise the bitterest reproof. If you reject it you are unhappy, if you accept it you are undone. The compliments of a king are of themselves sufficient to pervert your intellect.

Fontanges. There you are mistaken twice over. It is not my person that pleases him so greatly; it is my spirit, my wit, my talents, my genius, and that very thing which you have mentioned . . . what was it? my intellect. He never complimented me the least upon my beauty. Others have said that I am the most beautiful young creature under heaven; a blossom of Paradise, a nymph, an angel;

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worth (let me whisper it in your ear . . do I lean too hard ?) a thousand Montespans. But his Majesty never said more on the occasion than that I was *imparagonable!* (what is that ?) and that he adored me; holding my hand and sitting quite still, when he might have romped with me and kissed me.

Bossuet. I would aspire to the glory of converting you.

Fontanges. You may do anything with me but convert me: you must not do that: I am a Catholic born. M. de Turenne and Mademoiselle de Duras were heretics: you did right there. The king told the chancellor that he prepared them, that the business was arranged for you, and that you had nothing to do but to get ready the arguments and responses, which you did gallantly, did not you ? And yet Mademoiselle de Duras was very awkward for a long while afterward in crossing herself, and was once remarked to beat her breast in the litany with the points of two fingers at a time, when everyone is taught to use only the second, whether it has a ring upon it or not. I am sorry she did so; for people might think her insincere in her conversion, and pretend that she kept a finger for each religion.

Bossuet. It would be as uncharitable to doubt the conviction of Mademoiselle de Duras as that of M. le Maréchal.

Fontanges. I have heard some fine verses, I can assure you, monseigneur, in which you are called the conqueror of Turenne. I should like to have been his conqueror myself, he was so great a man. I understand that you have lately done a much more difficult thing.

Bossuet. To what do you refer, mademoiselle ?

Fontanges. That you have overcome quietism. Now, in the name of wonder, how could you manage that ?

Bossuet. By the grace of God.

Fontanges. Yes indeed; but never until now did God give any preacher so much of his grace as to subdue this pest.

Bossuet. It has appeared among us but lately.

Fontanges. O dear me! I have always been subject to it dreadfully, from a child.

Bossuet. Really! I never heard so.

Fontanges. I checked myself as well as I could, although they constantly told me I looked well in it.

Bossuet. In what, mademoiselle ?

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Fontanges. In quietism; that is, when I fell asleep at sermon-time. I am ashamed that such a learned and pious man as M. de Fénelon should incline to it,* as they say he does.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, you quite mistake the matter.

Fontanges. Is not then M. de Fénelon thought a very pious and learned person?

Bossuet. And justly.

Fontanges. I have read a great way in a romance he has begun, about a knight-errant in search of a father. The king says there are many such about his court; but I never saw them, nor heard of them before. The marchioness de la Motte, his relative, brought it to me, written out in a charming hand, as much as the copy-book would hold, and I got through I know not how far. If he had gone on with the nymphs in the grotto I never should have been tired of him; but he quite forgot his own story, and left them at once; in a hurry (I suppose) to set out upon his mission to Saintonge in the *pays d'Aunis*, where the king has promised him a famous *heretic-hunt*. He is, I do assure you, a wonderful creature; he understands so much Latin and Greek, and knows all the tricks of the sorceresses. Yet you keep him under.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, if you really have anything to confess, and if you desire that I should have the honour of absolving you, it would be better to proceed in it, than to oppress me with unmerited eulogies on my humble labours.

Fontanges. You must first direct me, monseigneur: I have nothing particular. The king assures me there is no harm whatever in his love toward me.

Bossuet. That depends on your thoughts at the moment. If you abstract the mind from the body, and turn your heart toward heaven . . .

Fontanges. O monseigneur, I always did so . . . every time but once . . you quite make me blush. Let us converse about something else, or I shall grow too serious, just as you made me the other day at the funeral sermon. And now let me tell you, my lord, you

* The opinions of Molinos on mysticism and quietism had begun to spread abroad: but Fénelon, who had acquired already a very high celebrity for eloquence, had not yet written on the subject. We may well suppose that Bossuet was among the earliest assailants of a system which he afterward attacked so vehemently. The stormier superstition swept away the more vapory.

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compose such pretty funeral-sermons, I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing you preach mine.

Bossuet. Rather let us hope, mademoiselle, that the hour is yet far distant when so melancholy a service will be performed for you. May he who is unborn be the sad announcer of your departure hence! * May he indicate to those around him many virtues not perhaps yet full-blown in you, and point triumphantly to many faults and foibles checked by you in their early growth, and lying dead on the open road you shall have left behind you! To me the painful duty will, I trust, be spared: I am advanced in age: you are a child.

Fontanges. O no, I am seventeen.

Bossuet. I should have supposed you younger by two years at least. But do you collect nothing from your own reflection, which raises so many in my breast? You think it possible that I, aged as I am, may preach a sermon on your funeral. Alas, it is so! such things have been! There is, however, no funeral so sad to follow as the funeral of our own youth, which we have been pampering with fond desires, ambitious hopes, and all the bright berries that hang in poisonous clusters over the path of life.

Fontanges. I never minded them; I like peaches better; and one a day is quite enough for me.

Bossuet. We say that our days are few; and, saying it, we say too much. Marie-Angélique, we have but one: the past are not ours, and who can promise us the future? This in which we live is ours only while we live in it; the next moment may strike it off from us; the next sentence I would utter may be broken and fall between us.† The beauty that has made a thousand hearts to beat at one instant, at the succeeding has been without pulse and colour, without admirer, friend, companion, follower. She by whose eyes the march

* Bossuet was in his fifty-fourth year: Mademoiselle de Fontanges died in childbed the year following: he survived her twenty-three.

† Though Bossuet was capable of uttering and even of feeling such a sentiment, his conduct toward Fénelon, the fairest apparition that Christianity ever presented, was ungenerous and unjust.

While the diocese of Cambray was ravaged by Louis, it was spared by Marlborough; who said to the archbishop that if he was sorry he had not taken Cambray, it was chiefly because he lost for a time the pleasure of visiting so great a man. Peterborough, the next of our generals in glory, paid his respects to him some years afterward.

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of victory shall have been directed, whose name shall have animated armies at the extremities of the earth, drops into one of its crevices and mingles with its dust. Duchess de Fontanges! think on this! Lady! so live as to think on it undisturbed!

Fontanges. O God! I am quite alarmed. Do not talk thus gravely. It is in vain that you speak to me in so sweet a voice. I am frightened even at the rattle of the beads about my neck: take them off, and let us talk on other things. What was it that dropped on the floor as you were speaking? It seemed to shake the room, though it sounded like a pin or button.

Bossuet. Never mind it: leave it there: I pray you, I implore you, madame!

Fontanges. Why do you rise? why do you run? why not let me? I am nimbler. So, your ring fell from your hand, my lord bishop! How quick you are! Could not you have trusted me to pick it up?

Bossuet. Madame is too condescending: had this happened, I should have been overwhelmed with confusion. My hand is shrivelled; the ring has ceased to fit it. A mere accident may draw us into perdition: a mere accident may bestow on us the means of grace. A pebble has moved you more than my words.

Fontanges. It pleases me vastly: I admire rubies: I will ask the king for one exactly like it. This is the time he usually comes from the chase. I am sorry you can not be present to hear how prettily I shall ask him: but that is impossible, you know: for I shall do it just when I am certain he would give me anything. He said so himself: he said but yesterday

"Such a sweet creature is worth a world . ."

and no actor on the stage was ever more like a king than his Majesty was when he spoke it, if he had but kept his wig and robe on. And yet you know he is rather stiff and wrinkled for so great a monarch; and his eyes, I am afraid, are beginning to fail him; he looks so close at things.

Bossuet. Mademoiselle, such is the duty of a prince who desires to conciliate our regard and love.

Fontanges. Well, I think so too; though I did not like it in him at first. I am sure he will order the ring for me, and I will confess to you with it upon my finger. But first I must be cautious and particular to know of him how much it is his royal will that I should say.

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VI. JOHN OF GAUNT AND JOANNA OF KENT.

Joanna. How is this my cousin,* that you are besieged in your own house, by the citizens of London? I thought you were their idol.

Gaunt. If their idol, madam, I am one which they may tread on as they list when down; but which, by my soul and knighthood! the ten best battle-axes among them shall find it hard work to unshrine.

Pardon me . . . I have no right perhaps to take or touch this hand . . . yet, my sister, bricks and stones and arrows are not presents fit for you: let me conduct you some paces hence.

Joanna. I will speak to those below in the street: quit my hand: they shall obey me.

Gaunt. If you intend to order my death, madam, your guards who have entered my court, and whose spurs and halberts I hear upon the staircase, may overpower my domestics; and, seeing no such escape as becomes my dignity, I submit to you. Behold my sword at your feet! Some formalities, I trust, will be used in the proceedings against me. Entitle me, in my attainder, not John of Gaunt, not Duke of Lancaster, not King of Castile; nor commemorate my father, the most glorious of princes, the vanquisher and pardoner of the most powerful; nor style me, what those who loved or who flattered me

* Joanna, called the fair maid of Kent, was cousin of the Black Prince, whom she married. John of Gaunt was suspected of aiming at the crown in the beginning of Richard's minority, which, increasing the hatred of the people against him for favouring the sect of Wicliffe, excited them to demolish his house and to demand his impeachment.

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did when I was happier, cousin to the Fair Maid of Kent. Joanna! those days are over! But no enemy, no law, no eternity can take away from me, or move further off, my affinity in blood to the conqueror in the field of Cressy, of Poictiers, and Najora. Edward was my brother when he was but your cousin; and the edge of my shield has clinked on his in many a battle. Yes, we were ever near, if not in worth, in danger.

Joanna. Attainder! God avert it! Duke of Lancaster, what dark thought . . . Alas! that the Regency should have known it! I came hither, sir, for no such purpose as to ensnare or incriminate or alarm you.

These weeds might surely have protected me from the fresh tears you have drawn forth.

Gaunt. Sister, be comforted! this visor too has felt them.

Joanna. O my Edward! my own so lately! Thy memory . . . thy beloved image . . . which never hath abandoned me . . . makes me bold; I dare not say generous; for in saying it I should cease to be so . . . and who could be called generous by the side of thee! I will rescue from perdition the enemy of my son.

Cousin, you loved your brother: love then what was dearer to him than his life: protect what he, valiant as you have seen him, can not! The father, who foiled so many, hath left no enemies: the innocent child, who can injure no one, finds them!

Why have you unlaced and laid aside your visor? Do not expose your body to those missiles. Hold your shield before yourself, and step aside. I need it not. I am resolved . . .

Gaunt. On what, my cousin? Speak, and by the Lord! it shall be done. This breast is your shield; this arm is mine.

Joanna. Heavens! who could have hurled those masses of stone from below! they stunned me. Did they descend all of them together? or did they split into fragments on hitting the pavement?

Gaunt. Truly I was not looking that way: they came, I must believe, while you were speaking.

Joanna. Aside! aside! further back! disregard *me!* Look! that last arrow sticks half its head deep in the wainscot. It shook so violently, I did not see the feather at first.

No, no, Lancaster! I will not permit it. Take your shield up again; and keep it all before you. Now step aside . . I am resolved to prove whether the people will hear me.

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Gaunt. Then, madam, by your leave . . .

Joanna. Hold! forbear! Come hither! hither . . . not forward.

Gaunt. Villains! take back to your kitchens those spits and skewers that you forsooth would fain call swords and arrows; and keep your bricks and stones for your graves!

Joanna. Imprudent man! who can save you? I shall be frightened: I must speak at once.

O good kind people! ye who so greatly loved me, when I am sure I had done nothing to deserve it, have I (unhappy me!) no merit with you now, when I would assuage your anger, protect your fair fame, and send you home contented with yourselves and me! Who is he, worthy citizens, whom ye would drag to slaughter?

True indeed he did revile some one; neither I nor you can say whom; some feaster and rioter, it seems, who had little right (he thought) to carry sword or bow, and who, to show it, hath slunk away. And then another raised his anger; he was indignant that, under his roof, a woman should be exposed to stoning. Which of you would not be as choleric in a like affront? In the house of which among you, should I not be protected as resolutely?

No, no: I never can believe those angry cries. Let none ever tell me again he is the enemy of my son, of his king, your darling child Richard. Are your fears more lively than a poor weak female's? than a mother's? yours, whom he hath so often led to victory, and praised to his father, naming each . . . He, John of Gaunt, the defender of the helpless, the comforter of the desolate, the rallying signal of the desperately brave!

Retire, Duke of Lancaster! This is no time . . .

Gaunt. Madam, I obey: but not through terror of that puddle at the house-door, which my handful of dust would dry up. Deign to command me!

Joanna. In the name of my son then, retire!

Gaunt. Angelic goodness! I must fairly win it.

Joanna. I think I know his voice that crieth out, "Who will answer for him?" An honest and loyal man's, one who would counsel and save me in any difficulty and danger. With what pleasure and satisfaction, with what perfect joy and confidence, do I answer our right-trusty and well-judging friend!

"Let Lancaster bring his sureties," say you, "and we separate."

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A moment yet before we separate; if I might delay you so long, to receive your sanction of those sureties; for in such grave matters it would ill become us to be over-hasty. I could bring fifty, I could bring a hundred, not from among soldiers, not from among courtiers, but selected from yourselves, were it equitable and fair to show such partialities, or decorous in the parent and guardian of a king to offer any other than herself.

Raised by the hand of the Almighty from amidst you, but still one of you, if the mother of a family is a part of it, here I stand, surety for John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, for his loyalty and allegiance,

Gaunt (*running toward Joanna*). Are the rioters then bursting into the chamber through the windows?

Joanna. The windows and doors of this solid edifice rattled and shook at the people's acclamation. My word is given for you: this was theirs in return. Lancaster! what a voice have the people when they speak out! It shakes me with astonishment, almost with consternation, while it establishes the throne: what must it be when it is lifted up in vengeance!

Gaunt. Wind: vapour . . .

Joanna. . . . Which none can wield nor hold. Need I say this to my cousin of Lancaster?

Gaunt. Rather say, madam, that there is always one star above which can tranquillise and control them.

Joanna. Go, cousin! another time more sincerity!

Gaunt. You have this day saved my life from the people: for I now see my danger better, when it is no longer close before me. My Christ! if ever I forget . . .

Joanna. Swear not: every man in England hath sworn what you would swear. But if you abandon my Richard, my brave and beautiful child, may . . . Oh! I could never curse, nor wish an evil: but, if you desert him in the hour of need, you will think of those who have not deserted you, and your own great heart will lie heavy on you, Lancaster!

Am I graver than I ought to be, that you look dejected? Come then, gentle cousin, lead me to my horse, and accompany me home. Richard will embrace us tenderly. Every one is dear to every other upon rising out fresh from peril: affectionately then will he look, sweet boy, upon his mother and his uncle! Never mind how many

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questions he may ask you, nor how strange ones. His only displeasure, if he has any, will be, that he stood not against the rioters; or among them.

Gaunt. Older than he have been as fond of mischief, and as fickle in the choice of a party.

I shall tell him that, coming to blows, the assailant is often in the right; that the assailed is always.

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VII. THE LADY LISLE AND ELIZABETH GAUNT.*

Lady Lisle. Madam, I am confident you will pardon me; for affliction teaches forgiveness.

Elizabeth Gaunt. From the cell of the condemned we are going, unless my hopes mislead me, where alone we can receive it.

Tell me, I beseech you, lady! in what matter or manner do you think you can have offended a poor sinner such as I am. Surely we come into this dismal place for our offences; and it is not here that any can be given or taken.

Lady Lisle. Just now, when I entered the prison, I saw your countenance serene and cheerful; you looked upon me for a time with an unaltered eye: you turned away from me, as I fancied, only to utter some expressions of devotion; and again you looked upon me; and tears rolled down your face. Alas! that I should, by any circumstance, any action or recollection, make another unhappy. Alas! that I should deepen the gloom in the very shadow of death.

Elizabeth Gaunt. Be comforted: you have not done it. Grief softens and melts and flows away with tears.

I wept because another was greatly more wretched than myself. I wept at that black attire: at that attire of modesty and of widowhood.

Lady Lisle. It covers a wounded, almost a broken heart: an unworthy offering to our blessed Redeemer.

* Burnet relates from William Penn, who was present, that Elizabeth Gaunt placed the faggots round her body with her own hands. Lady Lisle was not burnt alive, though sentenced to it, but hanged and beheaded.

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Elizabeth Gaunt. In his name let us now rejoice! Let us offer our prayers and our thanks at once together! We may yield up our souls perhaps at the same hour.

Lady Lisle. Is mine so pure? Have I bemoaned, as I should have done, the faults I have committed? Have my sighs arisen for the unmerited mercies of my God? and not rather for him, the beloved of my heart, the adviser and sustainer I have lost!

Open, O gates of Death!

Smile on me, approve my last action in this world, O virtuous husband! O saint and martyr! my brave, compassionate, and loving Lisle.

Elizabeth Gaunt. And can not you too smile, sweet lady? are not you with him even now? Doth body, doth clay, doth air, separate and estrange free spirits? Bethink you of his gladness, of his glory; and begin to partake them.

O! how could an Englishman, how could twelve, condemn to death, condemn to so great an evil as they thought it and may find it, this innocent and helpless widow!

Lady Lisle. Blame not *that* jury! blame not the jury which brought against me the verdict of guilty. I was so: I received in my house a wanderer who had fought under the rash and giddy Monmouth. He was hungry and thirsty, and I took him in. My Saviour had commanded, my king had forbidden it.

Yet the twelve would not have delivered me over to death, unless the judge had threatened them with an accusation of treason in default of it. Terror made them unanimous: they redeemed their properties and lives at the stated price.

Elizabeth Gaunt. I hope at least the unfortunate man, whom you received in the hour of danger, may avoid his penalty.

Lady Lisle. Let us hope it.

Elizabeth Gaunt. I too am imprisoned for the same offence; and I have little expectation that he who was concealed by me hath any chance of happiness, although he hath escaped. Could I find the means of conveying to him a small pittance, I should leave the world the more comfortably.

Lady Lisle. Trust in God; not in one thing or another, but in all. Resign the care of this wanderer to *his* guidance.

Elizabeth Gaunt. He abandoned that guidance.

Lady Lisle. Unfortunate! how can money then avail him!

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Elizabeth Gaunt. It might save him from distress and from despair, from the taunts of the hard-hearted and from the inclemency of the godly.

Lady Lisle. In godliness, O my friend! there can not be inclemency.

Elizabeth Gaunt. You are thinking of perfection, my dear lady; and I marvel not at it; for what else hath ever occupied your thoughts! But godliness, in almost the best of us, often is austere, often uncompliant and rigid, proner to reprove than to pardon, to drag back or thrust aside than to invite and help onward.

Poor man! I never knew him before: I can not tell how he shall endure his self-reproach, or whether it will bring him to calmer thoughts hereafter.

Lady Lisle. I am not a busy idler in curiosity; nor, if I were, is there time enough left me for indulging in it; yet gladly would I learn the history of events, at the first appearance so resembling those in mine.

Elizabeth Gaunt. The person's name I never may disclose; which would be the worst thing I could betray of the trust he placed in me. He took refuge in my humble dwelling, imploring me in the name of Christ to harbour him for a season. Food and raiment were afforded him unsparingly; yet his fears made him shiver through them. Whatever I could urge of prayer and exhortation was not wanting: still, although he prayed, he was disquieted. Soon came to my ears the declaration of the king, that his majesty would rather pardon a rebel than the concealer of a rebel. The hope was a faint one: but it *was* a hope; and I gave it him. His thanksgivings were now more ardent, his prayers more humble, and oftener repeated. They did not strengthen his heart: it was unpurified and unprepared for them. Poor creature! he consented with it to betray me; and I am condemned to be burnt alive. Can we believe, can we encourage the hope, that in his weary way through life he will find those only who will conceal from him the knowledge of this execution? Heavily, too heavily, must it weigh on so irresolute and infirm a breast.

Let it not move you to weeping.

Lady Lisle. It does not: oh! it does not.

Elizabeth Gaunt. What then?

Lady Lisle. Your saintly tenderness, your heavenly tranquillity.

Elizabeth Gaunt. No, no: abstain! abstain! It was I who

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grieved: it was I who doubted. Let us now be firmer: we have both the same rock to rest upon. See! I shed no tears.

I saved his life, an unprofitable and (I fear) a joyless one: he, by God's grace, has thrown open to me, and at an earlier hour than ever I ventured to expect it, the avenue to eternal bliss.

Lady Lisle. O my good angel! that bestrewest with fresh flowers a path already smooth and pleasant to me, may those timorous men who have betrayed, and those misguided ones who have prosecuted us, be conscious on their death-beds that we have entered it! and they too will at last find rest.

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VIII. THE EMPRESS CATHARINE AND PRINCESS DASHKOF.

Catharine. Into his heart! into his heart! If he escapes we perish.

Do you think, Dashkof, they can hear me through the double door? Yes; hark! they heard me: they have done it.

What bubbling and gurgling! he groaned but once.

Listen! his blood is busier now than it ever was before. I should not have thought it could have splashed so loud upon the floor, although our bed indeed is rather of the highest.

Put your ear against the lock.

Dashkof. I hear nothing.

Catharine. My ears are quicker than yours, and know these notes better. Let me come . . . Hear nothing! You did not wait long enough, nor with coolness and patience. There! . . . there again! The drops are now like lead: every half-minute they penetrate the eider-down and the mattress . . How now! which of these fools has brought his dog with him? What tramping and lapping! The creature will carry the marks all about the palace with his feet and muzzle.

Dashkof. O heavens!

Catharine. Are you afraid?

Dashkof. There is a horror that surpasses fear, and will have none of it. I knew not this before.

Catharine. You turn pale and tremble. You should have supported me, in case I had required it.

Dashkof. I thought only of the tyrant. Neither in life nor in death could any one of these miscreants make me tremble. But the husband slain by his wife: . . I saw not into my heart: I looked not into it: and it chastises me.

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Catharine. Dashkof, are you then really unwell?

Dashkof. What will Russia, what will Europe say?

Catharine. Russia has no more voice than a whale. She may toss about in her turbulence; but my artillery (for now indeed I can safely call it mine) shall stun and quiet her.

Dashkof. God grant . . .

Catharine. I can not but laugh at thee, my pretty Dashkof! God grant forsooth! He has granted all we wanted from him at present, the safe removal of this odious Peter.

Dashkof. Yet Peter loved *you:* and even the worst husband must leave surely the recollection of some sweet moments. The sternest must have trembled, both with apprehension and with hope, at the first alteration in the health of his consort; at the first promise of true union, imperfect without progeny. Then there are thanks rendered together to heaven, and satisfactions communicated, and infant words interpreted; and when the one has failed to pacify the sharp cries of babyhood, pettish and impatient as sovranty itself, the success of the other in calming it, and the unenvied triumph of this exquisite ambition, and the calm gazes that it wins upon it.

Catharine. Are these, my sweet friend, your lessons from the stoic school? Are not they rather the pale-faced reflections of some kind epithalamiast from Livonia or Bessarabia? Come, come away. I am to know nothing at present of the deplorable occurrence. Did not you wish his death?

Dashkof. It is not his death that shocks me.

Catharine. I understand you: beside, you said as much before.

Dashkof. I fear for your renown.

Catharine. And for your own good name, ay Dashkof!

Dashkof. He was not, nor did I ever wish him to be, my friend.

Catharine. You hated him.

Dashkof. Even hatred may be plucked up too roughly.

Catharine. Europe shall be informed of my reasons, if she should ever find out that I countenanced the conspiracy. She shall be persuaded that her repose made the step necessary; that my own life was in danger: that I fell upon my knees to soften the conspirators; that, only when I had fainted, the horrible deed was done. She knows already that Peter was always ordering new exercises and uniforms: and my ministers can evince at the first audience my womanly love of peace.

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Dashkof. Europe may be more easily subjugated than duped.

Catharine. She shall be both, God willing.

Dashkof. The majesty of thrones will seem endangered by this open violence.

Catharine. The majesty of thrones is never in jeopardy by those who sit upon them. A sovran may cover one with blood more safely than a subject can pluck a feather out of the cushion. It is only when the people does the violence that we hear an ill report of it. Kings poison and stab one another in pure legitimacy. Do your republican ideas revolt from such a doctrine?

Dashkof. I do not question this right of theirs, and never will oppose their exercise of it. But if you prove to the people how easy a matter it is to extinguish an emperor, and how pleasantly and prosperously we may live after it, is it not probable that they also will now and then try the experiment; particularly if any one in Russia should hereafter hear of glory and honour, and how immortal are these by the consent of mankind, in all countries and ages, in him who releases the world, or any part of it, from a lawless and ungovernable despot? The chances of escape are many, and the greater if he should have no accomplices. Of his renown there is no doubt at all: that is placed above chance and beyond time, by the sword he hath exercised so righteously.

Catharine. True; but we must reason like democrats no longer. Republicanism is the best thing we can have, when we can not have power: but no one ever held the two together. I am now autocrat.

Dashkof. Truly then may I congratulate you. The dignity is the highest a mortal can attain.

Catharine. I know and feel it.

Dashkof. I wish you always may.

Catharine. I doubt not the stability of power: I can make constant both Fortune and Love. My Dashkof smiles at this conceit: she has here the same advantage, and does not envy her friend, even the autocracy.

Dashkof. Indeed I do, and most heartily.

Catharine. How!

Dashkof. I know very well what those intended who first composed the word: but they blundered egregiously. In spite of them, it signifies power over oneself; of all power the most enviable, and the least consistent with power over others.

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I hope and trust there is no danger to you from any member of the council-board, inflaming the guards or other soldiery.

Catharine. The members of the council-board did not sit *at* it, but *upon* it, and their tactics were performed cross-legged. What partisans are to be dreaded of that commander-in-chief, whose chief command is over pantaloons and facings, whose utmost glory is perched on loops and feathers, and who fancies that battles are to be won rather by pointing the hat than the cannon?

Dashkof. Peter was not insensible to glory: few men are: but wiser heads than his have been perplexed in the road to it, and many have lost it by their ardour to attain it. I have always said that, unless we devote ourselves to the public good, we may perhaps be celebrated: but it is beyond the power of Fortune, or even of Genius, to exalt us above the dust.

Catharine. Dashkof, you are a sensible sweet creature, but rather too romantic on *principle*, and rather too visionary on glory. I shall always both esteem and love you; but no other woman in Europe will be great enough to endure you, and you will really put the men *hors de combat*. Thinking is an enemy to beauty, and no friend to tenderness. Men can ill brook it one in another: in women it renders them what they would fain call scornful (vain assumption of high prerogative!), and what you would find bestial and outrageous. As for my reputation, which I know is dear to you, I can purchase all the best writers in Europe with a snuff-box each, and all the remainder with its contents. Not a gentleman of the Academy but is enchanted by a tooth-pick, if I deign to send it him. A brilliant makes me Semiramis, a watch-chain Venus, a ring Juno. Voltaire is my friend.

Dashkof. He was Frederick's.

Catharine. I shall be the *Pucelle* of Russia. No! I had forgotten . . he has treated her scandalously.

Dashkof. Does your Majesty value the flatteries of a writer who ridicules the most virtuous and glorious of his nation? who crouched before that monster of infamy, Louis XV.; and that worse monster, the king his predecessor? He reviled with every indignity and indecency the woman who rescued France, and who alone, of all that ever led the armies of that kingdom, made its conquerors the English tremble. Its monarchs and marshals cried and ran like capons, flapping their fine crests from wall to wall, and cackling at one breath

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defiance and surrender. The village girl drew them back into battle, and placed the heavens themselves against the enemies of Charles. She seemed supernatural: the English recruits deserted: they would not fight against God.

Catharine. Fools and bigots!

Dashkof. The whole world contained none other, excepting those who fed upon them. The maid of Orleans was pious and sincere: her life asserted it; her death confirmed it. Glory to her, Catharine, if you love glory. Detestation to him who has profaned the memory of this most holy martyr, the guide and avenger of her king, the redeemer and saviour of her country.

Catharine. Be it so: but Voltaire buoys me up above some impertinent troublesome qualms.

Dashkof. If deism had been prevalent in Europe, he would have been the champion of Christianity: and if the French had been protestants, he would have shed tears upon the papal slipper. He buoys up no one; for he gives no one hope. He may amuse: dulness itself must be amused indeed by the versatility and brilliancy of his wit.

Catharine. While I was meditating on the great action I have now so happily accomplished, I sometimes thought his wit feeble. This idea, no doubt, originated from the littleness of everything in comparison with my undertaking.

Dashkof. Alas! we lose much when we lose the capacity of being delighted by men of genius, and gain little when we are forced to run to them for incredulity.

Catharine. I shall make some use of my philosopher at Ferney. I detest him as much as you do; but where will you find me another who writes so pointedly? You really then fancy that people care for truth! Innocent Dashkof! Believe me, there is nothing so delightful in life as to find a liar in a person of repute. Have you never heard good folks rejoicing at it? or rather, can you mention to me anyone who has not been in raptures when he could communicate such glad tidings? The goutiest man would go on foot without a crutch to tell his friend of it at midnight; and would cross the Neva for the purpose, when he doubted whether the ice would bear him. Men in general are so weak in truth, that they are obliged to put their bravery under it, to prop it. Why do they pride themselves, think you, on their courage, when the bravest of them is by many

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degrees, less courageous than a mastiff-bitch in the straw? It is only that they may be rogues without hearing it, and make their fortunes without rendering an account of them.

Now we chat again as we used to do. Your spirits and your enthusiasm have returned. Courage, my sweet Dashkof; do not begin to sigh again. We never can want husbands while we are young and lively. Alas! I can not always be so. Heigho! But serfs and preferment will do . . none shall refuse me at ninety . . Paphos or Tobolsk.

Have not you a song for me?

Dashkof. German or Russian?

Catharine. Neither, neither. Some frightful word might drop . . might remind me . . no, nothing shall remind me. French rather: French songs are the liveliest in the world.

Is the rouge off my face?

Dashkof. It is rather in streaks and mottles, excepting just under the eyes, where it sits as it should do.

Catharine. I am heated and thirsty: I can not imagine how: I think we have not yet taken our coffee . . was it so strong? What am I dreaming of? I could eat only a slice of melon at breakfast; my duty urged me *then;* and dinner is yet to come. Remember, I am to faint at the midst of it when the intelligence comes in, or rather when, in despite of every effort to conceal it from me, the awful truth has flashed upon my mind. Remember too, you are to catch me, and to cry for help, and to tear those fine flaxen hairs which we laid up together on the toilet, and we are both to be as inconsolable as we can be for the life of us. Not now, child, not now. Come, sing. I know not how to fill up the interval. Two long hours yet! how stupid and tiresome! I wish all things of the sort could be done and be over in a day. They are mightily disagreeable when by nature one is not cruel. People little know my character. I have the tenderest heart upon earth: I am courageous, but I am full of weaknesses: I possess in perfection the higher part of men, and, to a friend I may say it, the most amiable part of women. Ho! ho! at last you smile: now your thoughts upon that.

Dashkof. I have heard fifty men swear it.

Catharine. They lied, the knaves! I hardly knew them by sight. We were talking of the sad necessity . . . Ivan must follow next: he is heir to the throne. I have a wild, impetuous, pleasant little

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protégé, who shall attempt to rescue him. I will have him persuaded and incited to it, and assured of pardon on the scaffold. He can never know the trick we play him; unless his head, like a bottle of Bordeaux, ripens its contents in the sawdust. Orders are given that Ivan be despatched at the first disturbance in the precincts of the castle; in short, at the fire of the sentry: but not now: another time: two such scenes together, and without some interlude, would perplex people.

I thought we spoke of singing: do not make me wait, my dearest creature! Now can not you sing as usual, without smoothing your doves-throat with your handkerchief, and taking off your necklace? Give it me then; give it me: I will hold it for you: I must play with something.

Sing, sing; I am quite impatient.*

* Can we wonder that a set of despots, who have, in unbroken succession, murdered, or instigated the murder of, sons, husbands, wives, fathers, should feel the necessity of reducing the world to slavery and ignorance, of abolishing the use of letters, of extinguishing the enthusiasm of poetry, of hood-winking the glances of fiction, of shutting up the records of history, and of laying one vast iron hand upon the human mouth, covering the lips and nostrils of aggregated nations, fastened and waxed together for the purpose, like the reeds of Pan's pipe?

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IX. LEOFRIC AND GODIVA.

Godiva. There is a dearth in the land, my sweet Leofric! Remember how many weeks of drought we have had, even in the deep pastures of Leicestershire; and how many Sundays we have heard the same prayers for rain, and supplications that it would please the Lord in his mercy to turn aside his anger from the poor pining cattle. You, my dear husband, have imprisoned more than one malefactor for leaving his dead ox in the public way; and other hinds have fled before you out of the traces, in which they and their sons and their daughters, and haply their old fathers and mothers, were dragging the abandoned wain homeward. Although we were accompanied by many brave spearmen and skilful archers, it was perilous to pass the creatures which the farm-yard dogs, driven from the hearth by the poverty of their masters, were tearing and devouring; while others, bitten and lamed, filled the air either with long and deep howls or sharp and quick barkings, as they struggled with hunger and feebleness or were exasperated by heat and pain. Nor could the thyme from the heath, nor the bruised branches of the fir-tree, extinguish or abate the foul odour.

Leofric. And now, Godiva my darling, thou art afraid we should be eaten up before we enter the gates of Coventry; or perchance that in the gardens there are no roses to greet thee, no sweet herbs for thy mat and pillow.

Godiva. Leofric, I have no such fears. This is the month of roses: I find them everywhere since my blessed marriage: they, and all other sweet herbs, I know not why, seem to greet me wherever I look at them, as though they knew and expected me. Surely they can not feel that I am fond of them.

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Leofric. O light laughing simpleton! But what wouldst thou? I came not hither to pray; and yet if praying would satisfy thee, or remove the drought, I would ride up straightway to Saint Michael's and pray until morning.

Godiva. I would do the same, O Leofric! but God hath turned away his ear from holier lips than mine. Would my own dear husband hear me, if I implored him for what is easier to accomplish? what he can do like God.

Leofric. How! what is it?

Godiva. I would not, in the first hurry of your wrath, appeal to you, my loving lord, in behalf of these unhappy men who have offended you.

Leofric. Unhappy! is that all?

Godiva. Unhappy they must surely be, to have offended you so grievously. What a soft air breathes over us! how quiet and serene and still an evening! how calm are the heavens and the earth! shall none enjoy them? not even we, my Leofric! The sun is ready to set: let it never set, O Leofric, on your anger. These are not my words; they are better than mine; should they lose their virtue from my unworthiness in uttering them!

Leofric. Godiva, wouldst thou plead to me for rebels?

Godiva. They have then drawn the sword against you! Indeed I knew it not.

Leofric. They have omitted to send me my dues, established by my ancestors, well knowing of our nuptials, and of the charges and festivities they require, and that in a season of such scarcity my own lands are insufficient.

Godiva. If they were starving as they said they were . . .

Leofric. Must I starve too? Is it not enough to lose my vassals?

Godiva. Enough! O God! too much! too much! may you never lose them! Give them life, peace, comfort, contentment. There are those among them who kissed me in my infancy, and who blessed me at the baptismal font. Leofric, Leofric! the first old man I meet I shall think is one of those; and I shall think on the blessing he gave, and (ah me!) on the blessing I bring back to him. My heart will bleed, will burst . . and he will weep at it! he will weep, poor soul! for the wife of a cruel lord who denounces vengeance on him, who carries death into his family.

Leofric. We must hold solemn festivals.

Godiva. We must indeed.

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Leofric. Well then.

Godiva. Is the clamorousness that succeeds the death of God's dumb creatures, are crowded halls, are slaughtered cattle, festivals? are maddening songs and giddy dances, and hireling praises from party-coloured coats? Can the voice of a minstrel tell us better things of ourselves than our own internal one might tell us; or can his breath make our breath softer in sleep? O my beloved! let everything be a joyance to us: it will, if we will. Sad is the day, and worse must follow, when we hear the blackbird in the garden and do not throb with joy. But, Leofric, the high festival is strown by the servant of God upon the heart of man. It is gladness, it is thanksgiving; it is the orphan, the starveling, pressed to the bosom, and bidden as its first commandment to remember its benefactor. We will hold this festival; the guests are ready: we may keep it up for weeks, and months, and years together, and always be the happier and the richer for it. The beverage of this feast, O Leofric, is sweeter than bee or flower or vine can give us: it flows from heaven; and in heaven will it abundantly be poured out again, to him who pours it out here unsparingly.

Leofric. Thou art wild.

Godiva. I have indeed lost myself. Some Power, some good kind Power, melts me (body and soul and voice) into tenderness and love. O my husband, we must obey it. Look upon me! look upon me! lift your sweet eyes from the ground! I will not cease to supplicate; I dare not.

Leofric. We may think upon it.

Godiva. Never say that! What! think upon goodness when you can be good? Let not the infants cry for sustenance! The mother of our blessed Lord will hear them; us never, never afterward.

Leofric. Here comes the bishop: we are but one mile from the walls. Why dismountest thou? no bishop can expect it. Godiva! my honour and rank among men are humbled by this: Earl Godwin will hear of it: up! up! the bishop hath seen it: he urgeth his horse onward: dost thou not hear him now upon the solid turf behind thee?

Godiva. Never, no, never will I rise, O Leofric, until you remit this most impious tax, this tax on hard labour, on hard life.

Leofric. Turn round: look how the fat nag canters, as to the tune of a sinner's psalm, slow and hard-breathing. What reason or right can the people have to complain, while their bishop's steed is so sleek and well caparisoned? Inclination to change, desire to

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abolish old usages . . . Up! up! for shame! They shall smart for it, idlers! Sir bishop, I must blush for my young bride.

Godiva. My husband, my husband! will you pardon the city?

Leofric. Sir bishop! I could not think you would have seen her in this plight. Will I pardon? yea, Godiva, by the holy rood, will I pardon the city, when thou ridest naked at noontide through the streets.

Godiva. O my dear cruel Leofric, where is the heart you gave me! It was not so! can mine have hardened it!

Bishop. Earl, thou abashest thy spouse; she turneth pale and weepeth. Lady Godiva, peace be with thee.

Godiva. Thanks, holy man! peace will be with me when peace is with your city. Did you hear my lord's cruel word?

Bishop. I did, lady.

Godiva. Will you remember it, and pray against it?

Bishop. Wilt *thou* forget it, daughter?

Godiva. I am not offended.

Bishop. Angel of peace and purity!

Godiva. But treasure it up in your heart: deem it an incense, good only when it is consumed and spent, ascending with prayer and sacrifice. And now what was it?

Bishop. Christ save us! that he will pardon the city when thou ridest naked through the streets at noon.

Godiva. Did he not swear an oath?

Bishop. He sware by the holy rood.

Godiva. My Redeemer! thou hast heard it! save the city!

Leofric. We are now upon the beginning of the pavement: these are the suburbs: let us think of feasting: we may pray afterward: to-morrow we shall rest.

Godiva. No judgments then to-morrow, Leofric?

Leofric. None: we will carouse.

Godiva. The saints of heaven have given me strength and confidence: my prayers are heard: the heart of my beloved is now softened.

Leofric (*aside*). Ay, ay . . they shall smart though.

Godiva. Say, dearest Leofric, is there indeed no other hope, no other mediation?

Leofric. I have sworn: beside, thou hast made me redden and turn my face away from thee, and all the knaves have seen it: this adds to the city's crime.

Godiva. I have blushed too, Leofric, and was not rash nor obdurate.

Leofric. But thou, my sweetest, art given to blushing; there is

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no conquering it in thee. I wish thou hadst not alighted so hastily and roughly: it hath shaken down a sheaf of thy hair: take heed thou sit not upon it, lest it anguish thee. Well done! it mingleth now sweetly with the cloth of gold upon the saddle, running here and there, as if it had life and faculties and business, and were working thereupon some newer and cunninger device. O my beauteous Eve! there is a Paradise about thee! the world is refreshed as thou movest and breathest on it. I can not see or think of evil where thou art. I could throw my arms even here about thee. No signs for me! no shaking of sunbeams! no reproof or frown or wonderment . . . I *will* say it . . . now then for worse . . . I could close with my kisses thy half-open lips, ay, and those lovely and loving eyes, before the people.

Godiva. To-morrow you shall kiss me, and they shall bless you for it. I shall be very pale, for to-night I must fast and pray.

Leofric. I do not hear thee; the voices of the folk are so loud under this archway.

Godiva (to herself). God help them! good kind souls! I hope they will not crowd about me so to-morrow. O Leofric! could my name be forgotten! and yours alone remembered! But perhaps my innocence may save me from reproach! and how many as innocent are in fear and famine! No eye will open on me but fresh from tears. What a young mother for so large a family! Shall my youth harm me! Under God's hand it gives me courage. Ah, when will the morning come! ah, when will the noon be over!

The story of Godiva, at one of whose festivals or fairs I was present in my boyhood, has always much interested me; and I wrote a poem on it, sitting, I remember, by the *square pool* at Rugby. When I showed it to the friend in whom I had most confidence, he began to scoff at the subject; and on his reaching the last line, his laughter was loud and immoderate. This conversation has brought both laughter and stanza back to me, and the earnestness with which I entreated and implored my friend *not to tell the lads;* so heart-strickenly and desperately was I ashamed. The verses are these, if anyone else should wish another laugh at me.

In every hour, in every mood,
O lady, it is sweet and good
To bathe the soul in prayer,
And, at the close of such a day,
When we have ceased to bless and pray,
To dream on thy long hair.

May the peppermint be still growing on the bank in that place! W. S. L.

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X. THE MAID OF ORLEANS AND AGNES SOREL.

Agnes. If a boy could ever be found so beautiful and so bashful, I should have taken you for a boy about fifteen years old. Really, and without flattery, I think you very lovely.

Jeanne. I hope I shall be greatly more so.

Agnes. Nay, nay: do not expect to improve, except a little in manner. Manner is the fruit, blushes are the blossom: these must fall off before the fruit sets.

Jeanne. By God's help, I may be soon more comely in the eyes of men.

Agnes. Ha! ha! even in piety there is a spice of vanity. The woman can only cease to be the woman when angels have disrobed her in Paradise.

Jeanne. I shall be far from loveliness, even in my own eyes, until I execute the will of God in the deliverance of his people.

Agnes. Never hope it.

Jeanne. The deliverance that is never hoped seldom comes. We conquer by hope and trust.

Agnes. Be content to have humbled the proud islanders. O how I rejoice that a mere child has done so.

Jeanne. A child of my age, or younger, chastised the Philistines, and smote down the giant their leader.

Agnes. But Talbot is a giant of another mould: his will is immovable, his power is irresistible, his word of command is *Conquer*.

Jeanne. It shall be heard no longer. The tempest of battle drowns it in English blood.

Agnes. Poor simpleton! The English will recover from the

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stupor of their fright, believing thee no longer to be a sorceress. Did ever sword or spear intimidate them? Hast thou never heard of Creci? hast thou never heard of Agincourt? hast thou never heard of Poictiers? where the chivalry of France was utterly vanquished by sick and starving men, one against five. The French are the eagle's plume,-the English are his talon.

Jeanne. The talon and the plume shall change places.

Agnes. Too confident!

Jeanne. O lady! is anyone too confident in God?

Agnes. We may mistake his guidance. Already not only the whole host of the English, but many of our wisest and most authoritative churchmen, believe you on their consciences to act under the instigation of Satan.

Jeanne. What country or what creature has the Evil-one ever saved? With what has he tempted me? with reproaches, with scorn, with weary days, with slumberless nights, with doubts, distrusts, and dangers, with absence from all who cherish me, with immodest soldierly language, and perhaps an untimely and a cruel death.

Agnes. But you are not afraid.

Jeanne. Healthy and strong, yet always too timorous, a few seasons ago I fled away from the lowings of a young steer, if he ran opposite; I awaited not the butting of a full-grown kid; the barking of a house-dog at our neighbour's gate turned me pale as ashes. And (shame upon me!) I scarcely dared kiss the child, when he called on me with burning tongue in the pestilence of a fever.

Agnes. No wonder! A creature in a fever! what a frightful thing!

Jeanne. It would be were it not so piteous.

Agnes. And did you kiss it? Did you really kiss the lips?

Jeanne. I fancied mine would refresh them a little.

Agnes. And did they? I should have thought mine could do but trifling good in such cases.

Jeanne. Alas! when I believed I had quite cooled them, it was death had done it.

Agnes. Ah! this is courage.

Jeanne. The courage of the weaker sex, inherent in us all, but as deficient in me as in any, until an infant taught me my duty by its cries. Yet never have I quailed in the front of the fight, where I directed

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our ranks against the bravest. God pardon me if I err! but I believe his Spirit flamed within my breast, strengthened my arm, and led me on to victory.

Agnes. Say not so, or they will burn thee alive, poor child!

Why fallest thou before me? I have some power indeed, but in this extremity I could little help thee. The priest never releases the victim.

What! how! thy countenance is radiant with a heavenly joy: thy humility is like an angel's at the feet of God: I am unworthy to behold it.

Rise, Jeanne, rise!

Jeanne. Martyrdom too! The reward were too great for such an easy and glad obedience. France will become just and righteous: France will praise the Lord for her deliverance.

Agnes. Sweet enthusiast! I am confident, I am certain, of thy innocence.

Jeanne. O Lady Agnes!

Agnes. Why fixest thou thy eyes on me so piteously? Why sobbest thou? thou, to whom the representation of an imminent death to be apprehended for thee, left untroubled, joyous, exulting. Speak; tell me.

Jeanne. I must. This also is commanded me. You believe me innocent?

Agnes. In truth I do: why then look abashed? Alas! alas! could I mistake the reason? I spoke of innocence!

Leave me, leave me. Return another time. Follow thy vocation.

Jeanne. Agnes Sorel! be thou more than innocent, if innocence is denied thee. In the name of the Almighty, I call on thee to earn his mercy.

Agnes. I implore it incessantly, by day, by night.

Jeanne. Serve him as thou mayest best serve him; and thy tears, I promise thee, shall soon be less bitter than those which are dropping on this jewelled hand, and on the rude one which has dared to press it.

Agnes. What can I, what can I do?

Jeanne. Lead the king back to his kingdom.

Agnes. The king is in France.

Jeanne. No, no, no.

Agnes. Upon my word of honour.

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Jeanne. And at such a time, O Heaven! in idleness and sloth!

Agnes. Indeed no. He is busy (this is the hour) in feeding and instructing two young hawks. Could you but see the little miscreants, how they dare to bite and claw and tug at him. He never hurts or scolds them for it; he is so good-natured: he even lets them draw blood; he is so very brave!

Running away from France! Who could have raised such a report? Indeed he is here. He never thought of leaving the country: and his affairs are becoming more and more prosperous ever since the battle. Can you not take my asseveration? Must I say it? he is now in this very house.

Jeanne. Then not in France. In France all love their country. Others of our kings, old men tell us, have been captives; but less ignominiously. Their enemies have respected their misfortunes and their honour.

Agnes. The English have always been merciful and generous.

Jeanne. And will you be less generous, less merciful?

Agnes. I?

Jeanne. You; the beloved of Charles.

Agnes. This is too confident. No, no: do not draw back: it is not too confident: it is only too reproachful. But your actions have given you authority. I have, nevertheless, a right to demand of you what creature on earth I have ever treated ignominiously or unkindly.

Jeanne. Your beloved; your king.

Agnes. Never. I owe to him all I have, all I am.

Jeanne. Too true! But let him in return owe to you, O Lady Agnes, eternal happiness, eternal glory. Condescend to labour with the humble handmaiden of the Lord, in fixing his throne and delivering his people.

Agnes. I can not fight: I abominate war.

Jeanne. Not more than I do; but men love it.

Agnes. Too much.

Jeanne. Often too much, for often unjustly. But when God's right-hand is visible in the vanguard, we who are called must follow.

Agnes. I dare not; indeed I dare not.

Jeanne. You dare not? you who dare withhold the king from his duty!

Agnes. We must never talk of their duties to our princes.

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Jeanne. Then we omit to do much of our own. It is now mine: but above all it is yours.

Agnes. There are learned and religious men who might more properly.

Jeanne. Are these learned and religious men in the court? Pray tell me: since, if they are, seeing how poorly they have sped, I may peradventure, however unwillingly, however blameably, abate a little of my reverence for learning, and look for pure religion in lower places.

Agnes. They are modest; and they usually ask of me in what manner they may best please their master.

Jeanne. They believe then that your affection is proportional to the power you possess over him. I have heard complaints that it is usually quite the contrary. But can such great men be loved? And do you love him? Why do you sigh so?

Agnes. Life is but sighs, and when they cease, 'tis over.

Jeanne. Now deign to answer me: do you truly love him?

Agnes. From my soul; and above it.

Jeanne. Then save him.

Lady! I am grieved at your sorrow, although it will hereafter be a source of joy unto you. The purest water runs from the hardest rock. Neither worth nor wisdom come without an effort; and patience and piety and salutary knowledge spring up and ripen from under the harrow of affliction. Before there is wine or there is oil, the grape must be trodden and the olive must be pressed.

I see you are framing in your heart the resolution.

Agnes. My heart can admit nothing but his image.

Jeanne. It must fall thence at last.

Agnes. Alas! alas! Time loosens man's affections. I may become unworthy. In the sweetest flower there is much that is not fragrance, and which transpires when the freshness has passed away.

Alas! if he should ever cease to love me!

Jeanne. Alas! if God should!

Agnes. Then indeed he might afflict me with so grievous a calamity.

Jeanne. And none worse after?

Agnes. What can there be?

O Heaven! mercy! mercy!

Jeanne Resolve to earn it: one hour suffices.

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Agnes. I am lost. Leave me, leave me.

Jeanne. Do we leave the lost? Are they beyond our care? Remember who died for them, and them only.

Agnes. You subdue me. Spare me: I would only collect my thoughts.

Jeanne. Cast them away. Fresh herbage springs from under the withered. Be strong, and, if you love, be generous. Is it more glorious to make a captive than to redeem one?

Agnes. Is he in danger! O!..you see all things..is he? is he? is he?

Jeanne. From none but you.

Agnes. God, it is evident, has given to thee alone the power of rescuing both him and France. He has bestowed on thee the mightiness of virtue.

Jeanne. Believe, and prove thy belief, that he has left no little of it still in thee.

Agnes. When we have lost our chastity, we have lost all, in his sight and in man's. But man is unforgiving, God is merciful.

Jeanne. I am so ignorant, I know only a part of my duties: yet those which my Maker has taught me I am earnest to perform. He teaches me that divine love has less influence over the heart than human: he teaches me that it ought to have more: finally, he commands me to announce to thee, not his anger, but his will.

Agnes. Declare it; O declare it. I do believe his holy word is deposited in thy bosom.

Jeanne. Encourage the king to lead his vassals to the field.

Agnes. When the season is milder.

Jeanne. And bid him leave you for ever.

Agnes. Leave me! one whole campaign! one entire summer! Oh anguish! It sounded in my ears as if you said "for ever."

Jeanne. I say it again.

Agnes. Thy power is superhuman, mine is not.

Jeanne. It ought to be, in setting God at defiance. The mightiest of the angels rued it.

Agnes. We did not make our hearts.

Jeanne. But we can mend them.

Agnes. Oh! mine (God knows it) bleeds.

Jeanne. Say rather it expels from it the last stagnant drop of its rebellious sin. Salutary pangs may be painfuller than mortal ones.

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Agnes. Bid him leave me! wish it! permit it! think it near! believe it ever can be! Go, go . . I am lost eternally.

Jeanne. And Charles too.

Agnes. Hush! hush! What has he done that other men have not done also?

Jeanne. He has left undone what others do. Other men fight for their country.

I always thought it was pleasant to the young and beautiful to see those they love victorious and applauded. Twice in my lifetime I have been present at wakes, where prizes were contended for: what prizes I quite forget: certainly not kingdoms. The winner was made happy: but there was one made happier. Village maids love truly: ay, they love glory too; and not their own. The tenderest heart loves best the courageous one: the gentle voice says, "Why wert thou so hazardous?" the deeper-toned replies, "For thee, for thee."

Agnes. But if the saints of heaven are offended, as I fear they may be, it would be presumptuous in the king to expose his person in battle, until we have supplicated and appeased them.

Jeanne. One hour of self-denial, one hour of stern exertion against the assaults of passion, outvalues a life of prayer.

Agnes. Prayer, if many others will pray with us, can do all things. I will venture to raise up that arm which has only one place for its repose: I will steal away from that undivided pillow, fragrant with fresh and unextinguishable love.

Jeanne. Sad earthly thoughts!

Agnes. You make them sad, you can not make them earthly. There is a divinity in a love descending from on high, in theirs who can see into the heart and mould it to their will.

Jeanne. Has man that power?

Agnes. Happy, happy girl! to ask it, and unfeignedly.

Jeanne. Be happy too.

Agnes. How? how?

Jeanne. By passing resolutely through unhappiness. It must be done.

Agnes. I will throw myself on the pavement, and pray until no star is in the heavens. Oh! I will so pray, so weep.

Jeanne. Unless you save the tears of others, in vain you shed your own.

Agnes. Again I ask you, what *can* I do?

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Jeanne. When God has told you what you ought to do, he has already told you what you can.

Agnes. I will think about it seriously.

Jeanne. Serious thoughts are folded up, chested, and unlooked-at: lighter, like dust, settle all about the chamber. The promise to think seriously dismisses and closes the door on the thought. Adieu! God pity and pardon you. Through you the wrath of Heaven will fall upon the kingdom.

Agnes. Denouncer of just vengeance, recall the sentence! I tremble before that countenance severely radiant: I sink amid that calm, more appalling than the tempest. Look not into my heart with those gentle eyes! O how they penetrate! They ought to see no sin: sadly must it pain them.

Jeanne. Think not of me: pursue thy destination: save France.

Agnes (*after a long pause*). Glorious privilege! divine appointment! Is it thus, O my Redeemer! my crimes are visited?

Come with me, blessed Jeanne! come instantly with me to the king: come to him whom thy virtue and valour have rescued.

Jeanne. Not now; nor ever with thee. Again I shall behold him; a conqueror at Orleans, a king at Rheims. Regenerate Agnes! be this thy glory, if there be any that is not God's.

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XI. RHADAMISTUS AND ZENOBIA.

Zenobia. My beloved! my beloved! I can endure the motion of the horse no longer; his weariness makes his pace so tiresome to me. Surely we have ridden far, very far from home; and how shall we ever pass the wide and rocky stream, among the whirlpools of the rapid and the deep Araxes? From the first sight of it, O my husband! you have been silent: you have looked at me at one time intensely, at another wildly: have you mistaken the road? or the ford? or the ferry?

Rhadamistus. Tired, tired! did I say? ay, thou must be. Here thou shalt rest: this before us is the place for it. Alight; drop into my arms: art thou within them?

Zenobia. Always in fear for me, my tender thoughtful Rhadamistus!

Rhadamistus. Rhadamistus then once more embraces his Zenobia!

Zenobia. And presses her to his bosom as with the first embrace.

Rhadamistus. What is the first to the last!

Zenobia. Nay, this is not the last.

Rhadamistus. Not quite, (O agony!) not quite; once more.

Zenobia. So: with a kiss: which you forget to take.

Rhadamistus (*aside*). And shall this shake my purpose? it may my limbs, my heart, my brain; but what my soul so deeply determined, it shall strengthen: as winds do trees in forests.

Zenobia. Come, come! cheer up. How good you are to be persuaded by me: back again at one word! Hark! where are those drums and bugles? on which side are these echoes?

Rhadamistus. Alight, dear, dear Zenobia! And does Rhadamistus then press thee to his bosom? Can it be!

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Zenobia. *Can it cease to be?* you would have said, my Rhadamistus! Hark! again those trumpets? on which bank of the water are they? Now they seem to come from the mountains, and now along the river. Men's voices too! threats and yells! You, my Rhadamistus, could escape.

Rhadamistus. Wherefore? with whom? and whither in all Asia?

Zenobia. Fly! there are armed men climbing up the cliffs.

Rhadamistus. It was only the sound of the waves in the hollows of them, and the masses of pebbles that rolled down from under you as you knelt to listen.

Zenobia. Turn round; look behind! is it dust yonder, or smoke? and is it the sun, or what is it, shining so crimson? not shining any longer now, but deep, and dull purple, embodying into gloom.

Rhadamistus. It is the sun, about to set at mid-day; we shall soon see no more of him.

Zenobia. Indeed! what an ill omen! but how can you tell that? Do you think it? I do not. Alas! alas! the dust and the sounds are nearer.

Rhadamistus. Prepare then, my Zenobia!

Zenobia. I was always prepared for it.

Rhadamistus. What reason, O unconfiding girl! from the day of our union, have I ever given you, to accuse, or to suspect me?

Zenobia. None, none: your love, even in these sad moments, raises me above the reach of fortune. How can it pain me so? Do I repine? Worse may it pain me; but let that love never pass away!

Rhadamistus. Was it then the loss of power and kingdom for which Zenobia was prepared?

Zenobia. The kingdom was lost when Rhadamistus lost the affection of his subjects. Why did they not love you? how could they not? Tell me so strange a thing.*

Rhadamistus. Fables, fables! about the death of Mithridates and his children: declamations, outcries: as if it were as easy to bring men to life again as . . I know not what . . to call after them.

Zenobia. But about the children?

Rhadamistus. In all governments there are secrets.

Zenobia. Between us?

* From the seclusion of the Asiatic women, Zenobia is ignorant of the crimes Rhadamistus had committed.

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Rhadamistus. No longer: time presses: not a moment is left us, not a refuge, not a hope!

Zenobia. Then why draw the sword?

Rhadamistus. Wanted I courage? did I not fight as becomes a king?

Zenobia. True, most true.

Rhadamistus. Is my resolution lost to me? did I but dream I had it?

Zenobia. Nobody is very near yet; nor can they cross the dell where we did. Those are fled who could have shown the pathway. Think not of defending me. Listen! look! what thousands are coming. The protecting blade above my head can only provoke the enemy. And do you still keep it there? You grasp my arm too hard. Can you look unkindly? Can it be? O think again and spare me, Rhadamistus! From the vengeance of man, from the judgments of heaven, the unborn may preserve my husband.

Rhadamistus. We must die! They advance; they see us; they rush forward!

Zenobia. Me, me would you strike? Rather let me leap from the precipice.

Rhadamistus. Hold! Whither would thy desperation? Art thou again within my grasp?

Zenobia. O my beloved! never let me call you cruel! let me love you in the last hour of seeing you as in the first. I must, I must . . and be it my thought in death that you love me so! I would have cast away my life to save you from remorse: it may do that and more, preserved by you. Listen! listen! among those who pursue us there are many fathers; childless by his own hand, none. Do not kill our baby . . the best of our hopes when we had many . . the baby not yet ours! Who shall then plead for you, my unhappy husband?

Rhadamistus. My honour; and before me, sole arbiter and sole audience of our cause. Bethink thee, Zenobia, of the indignities . . not bearing on my fortunes . . but imminent over thy beauty! What said I? did I bid thee think of them? Rather die than imagine, or than question me, what they are! Let me endure two deaths before my own, crueller than wounds or than age or than servitude could inflict on me, rather than make me name them.

Zenobia. Strike! Lose not a moment so precious! Why hesitate now my generous brave defender?

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Rhadamistus. Zenobia! dost thou bid it?

Zenobia. Courage is no longer a crime in you. Hear the shouts, the threats, the imprecations! Hear them, my beloved! let *me* no more.

Rhadamistus. Embrace me not, Zenobia! loose me, loose me!

Zenobia. I can not: thrust me away! Divorce . . but with death . . the disobedient wife, no longer your Zenobia. (*He strikes.*) Oh! oh! one innocent head . . in how few days . . should have reposed . . no, not upon this blood. Swim across! is there a descent . . an easy one, a safe one, anywhere? I might have found it for you! ill-spent time! heedless woman!

Rhadamistus. An arrow hath pierced me: more are showering round us. Go, my life's flower! the blighted branch drops after. Away! forth into the stream! strength is yet left me for it. (*He throws her into the river.*) She sinks not! O last calamity! She sinks! she sinks! Now both are well, and fearless! One look more! grant one more look! On what? where was it? which whirl? which ripple? they are gone too. How calm is the haven of the most troubled life! I enter it! Rebels! traitors! slaves! subjects! why gape ye? why halt ye? On, on, dastards! Oh that ye dared to follow! (*He plunges armed into the Araxes.*)

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XII. TANCREDI* AND CONSTANTIA.

Constantia. Is this in mockery, sir? Do you place me under a canopy, and upon what (no doubt) you presume to call a throne, for derision?

Tancredi. Madonna! if it never were a throne before, henceforward let none approach it but with reverence. The greatest, the most virtuous, of queens and empresses (it were indecorous in such an inferior as I am to praise in your presence aught else in you that raises men's admiration) leaves a throne for homage wherever she has rested.

Constantia. Count Tancredi! your past conduct ill accords with your present speech. Your courtesy, great as it is, would have been much greater, if you yourself had taken me captive, and had not turned your horse and rode back, on purpose that villanous hands might seize me.

Tancredi. Knightly hands (I speak it with all submission) are not villanous. I could not in my heart command you to surrender; and I would not deprive a brave man, a man distinguished for deference and loyalty, of the pleasure he was about to enjoy in encountering your two barons. I am confident he never was discourteous.

Constantia. He was; he took my horse's bridle by the bit, turned his back on me, and would not let me go.

Tancredi. War sometimes is guilty of such enormities, and even worse.

* Tancredi was crowned 1190, and died of grief at the loss of his only son, 1194. Constantia, daughter of William II. of Sicily, was married to the Emperor Henry VI.

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Constantia. I would rather have surrendered myself to the most courageous knight in Italy.

Tancredi. Which may that be?

Constantia. By universal consent, Tancredi, Count of Lecce.

Tancredi. To possess the highest courage, is but small glory; to be without it, is a great disgrace.

Constantia. Loyalty, not only to ladies, but to princes, is the true and solid foundation of it. Count of Lecce! am I not the daughter of your king?

Tancredi. I recognise in the Lady Constantia the daughter of our late sovran lord, King William, of glorious memory.

Constantia. Recognise then your queen.

Tancredi. Our laws, and the supporters of these laws, forbid it.

Constantia. Is that memory a glorious one, as you call it, which a single year is sufficient to erase? And did not my father nominate me his heir?

Tancredi. A kingdom is not among the chattels of a king: a people is paled within laws, and not within parks and chases: the powerfullest have no privilege to sport in that inclosure. The barons of the realm and the knights and the people assembled in Palermo, and there by acclamation called and appointed me to govern the state. Certainly the Lady Constantia is nearer to the throne in blood, and much worthier: I said so then. The unanimous reply was that Sicily should be independent of all other lands, and that neither German Kings nor Roman Emperors should controll her.

Constantia. You must be aware, sir, that an armed resistance to the Emperor is presumptuous and traitorous.

Tancredi. He has carried fire and sword into my country, and has excited the Genoese and Pisans, men speaking the same language as ourselves, to debark on our coasts, to demolish our villages, and to consume our harvests.

Constantia. Being a sovran, he possesses the undoubted right.

Tancredi. Being a Sicilian, I have no less a right to resist him.

Constantia. Right? Do rights appertain to vassals?

Tancredi. Even to them; and this one particularly. Were I still a vassal, I should remember that I am a king by election, by birth a Sicilian, and by descent a Norman.

Constantia. All these fine titles give no right whatever to the throne, from which an insuperable bar precludes you.

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Tancredi. What bar can there be which my sword and my people's love are unable to bear down?

Constantia. Excuse my answer.

Tancredi. Deign me one, I entreat you, Madonna! although the voice of my country may be more persuasive with me even than yours.

Constantia. Count Lecce! you are worthy of all honour, excepting that alone which can spring only from lawful descent.

Tancredi. My father was the first-born of the Norman conqueror, king of Sicily: my mother, in her own right, countess of Lecce. I have no reason to blush at my birth; nor did ever the noble breast which gave me nourishment heave with a sense of ignominy as she pressed me to it. She thought the blessing of the poor equivalent to the blessing of the priest.

Constantia. I would not refer to her ungently: but she by her alliance set at nought our Holy Father.

Tancredi. In all her paths, in all her words and actions, she obeyed him.

Constantia. Our Holy Father?

Tancredi. Our holiest, our only holy one, "our Father which is in heaven." She wants no apology: precedent is nothing: but remember our ancestors: I say *ours;* for I glory in the thought that they are the same, and so near. Among the early dukes of Normandy, vanquishers of France, and (what is greater) conquerors of England, fewer were born within the pale of wedlock than without. Nevertheless the ladies of our nation were always as faithful to love and duty, as if hoods and surplices and psalms had gone before them, and the church had been the vestibule to the bedchamber.

Constantia. My cousin the countess was irreproachable, and her virtues have rendered you as popular as your exploits.

Who is this pretty boy who holds down his head so, with the salver in his hand?

Tancredi. He is my son.

Constantia. Why then does he kneel before me?

Tancredi. To teach his father his duty.

Constantia. You acknowledge the rights of my husband?

Tancredi. To a fairer possession than fair Sicily.

Constantia. I must no longer hear this language.

Tancredi. I utter it from the depths of a heart as pure as the coldest.

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Constantia (to the boy). Yes, my sweet child! I accept the refreshments you have been holding so patiently and present so gracefully. But you should have risen from your knees; such a posture is undue to a captive.

Boy. Papa! what did the lady say? Do you ever make ladies captives?

(*To Constantia*). Run away: I will hold his hands for him.

Constantia. I intend to run away; but you are quite as dangerous as your father. Count! you must name my ransom.

Tancredi. Madonna, I received it when you presented your royal hand to my respectful homage. The barons who accompanied you are mounted at the door, in order to reconduct you; and the most noble and the most venerable of mine will be proud of the same permission.

Constantia. I also am a Sicilian, Tancredi! I also am sensible to the glories of the Norman race. Never shall my husband, if I have any influence over him, be the enemy of so courteous a knight. I could almost say, prosper! prosper! for the defence, the happiness, the example, of our Sicily.

Tancredi. We may be deprived of territory and power; but never of knighthood. The brave alone can merit it, the brave alone can confer it, the recreant alone can lose it. So long as there is Norman blood in my veins I am a knight: and our blood and our knighthood are given us to defend the sex. Insensate! I had almost said the weaker! and with your eyes before me!

Constantia. He can not be a rebel, nor a false bad man.

Tancredi. Lady! the sword which I humbly lay at your feet was, a few years ago, a black misshapen mass of metal: the gold that surrounds it, the jewel that surmounts it, the victories it hath gained, constitute now its least value; it owes the greatest to its position.

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XIII. PRINCESS MARY AND PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

Mary. My dear dear sister! it is long, very long, since we met.

Elizabeth. Methinks it was about the time they chopped off our uncle Seymour's head for him. Not that he was *our* uncle though . . he was only Edward's.

Mary. The Lord Protector, if not your uncle, was always doatingly fond of you; and he often declared to me, even within your hearing, he thought you very beautiful.

Elizabeth. He said as much of you, if that is all; and he told me why . . "*not to vex me*" . . as if, instead of vexing me, it would not charm me. I beseech your Highness, is there anything remarkable or singular in thinking me . . what he thought me?

Mary. No indeed; for so you are. But why call me *Highness?* drawing back and losing half your stature in the circumference of the curtsey.

Elizabeth. Because you are now, at this blessed hour, my lawful queen.

Mary. Hush, prythee hush! The parliament has voted otherwise.

Elizabeth. They would chouse you.

Mary. What would they do with me?

Elizabeth. Trump you.

Mary. I am still at a loss.

Elizabeth. Bamboozle you.

Mary. Really, my dear sister, you have been so courted by the gallants, that you condescend to adopt their language, in place of graver.

Elizabeth. Cheat you then . . will that do?

Mary. Comprehensibly.

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Elizabeth. I always speak as the thing spoken of requires. To the point. Would our father have minded the caitiffs?

Mary. Naming our father, I should have said, *our father now in bliss;* for surely he must be; having been a rock of defence against the torrent of irreligion.

Elizabeth. Well; in bliss or out, there, here, or anywhere, would he, royal soul! have minded parliament? No such fool he. There were laws before there were parliaments; and there were kings before there were laws. Were I in your Majesty's place (God forbid the thought should ever enter my poor weak head, even in a dream!) I would try the mettle of my subjects: I would mount my horse, and head them.

Mary. Elizabeth! you were always a better horsewoman than I am: I should be ashamed to get a fall among the soldiers.

Elizabeth. Pish! Pish! it would be among knights and nobles . . the worst come to the worst. Lord o' mercy! do you think they never saw such a thing before?

Mary. I must hear of no resistance to the powers that be. Beside, I am but a weak woman.

Elizabeth. I do not see why women should be weak, unless they like.

Mary. Not only the Commons, but likewise the peers, have sworn allegiance.

Elizabeth. Did you ever in your lifetime, in any chronicle or commentary, read of any parliament that was not as ready to be forsworn as to swear?

Mary. Alas!

Elizabeth. If ever you did, the book is a rare one, kept in an out-of-the-way library, in a cedar chest all to itself, with golden locks and amber seals thereto.

Mary. I would not willingly think so ill of men.

Elizabeth. For my part, I can't abide 'em. All that can be said, is, some are not so bad as others. You smile, and deem the speech a silly and superfluous one. We may live, sister Mary, to see and acknowledge that it is not quite so sure and flat a verity as it now appears to us. I never come near a primrose but I suspect an adder under it; and the sunnier the day the more misgivings.

Mary. But we are now, by the settlement of the monarchy, farther out of harm's way than ever.

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Elizabeth. If the wench has children to-morrow, as she may have, they will inherit.

Mary. No doubt they would.

Elizabeth. No doubt? I will doubt: and others shall doubt too. The heirs of my body . . yours first . . God prosper them! Parliament may be constrained to retrace its steps. One half sees no harm in taking bribes, the other no guilt in taking fright. Corruption is odious and costly; but when people have yielded to compulsion, conscience is fain to acquiesce. Men say they were forced, and what is done under force is invalid.

Mary. There was nothing like compulsion.

Elizabeth. Then let there be. Let the few yield to the many, and all to the throne. Now is your time to stir. The furnace is mere smut, and no bellows to blow the embers. Parliament is without a leader. Three or four turnspits are crouching to leap upon the wheel; but, while they are snarling and snapping one at another, what becomes of the roast? Take them by the scuf, and out with 'em. The people will applaud you. They want bread within doors, and honesty without. They have seen enough of partisans and parliaments.

Mary. We can not do without one.

Elizabeth. Convoke it then: but call it with sound of trumpet. Such a body is unlikely to find a head. There is little encouragement for an honest knight or gentleman to take the station. The Commons slink away with lowered shoulders, and bear hateful compunction against the very names and memory of those braver men, who, in dangerous times and before stern authoritative warlike sovrans, supported their pretensions. Kings, who peradventure would have strangled such ringleaders, well remember and well respect them: their fellows would disown their benefactors and maintainers. Kings abominate their example; clowns would efface the images on their sepulchres. What forbearance on our part can such knaves expect, or what succour from the people?

Mary. What is done is done.

Elizabeth. Oftentimes it is easier to undo than to do. I should rather be glad than mortified at what has been done yonder. In addition to those churls and chapmen in the lower house, there are also among the peers no few who voted most audaciously.

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Mary. The majority of them was of opinion that the Lady Jane should be invested with royal state and dignity.

Elizabeth. The majority! So much the better . . so much the better, say I. I would find certain folk who should make sharp inquest into their title-deeds, and spell the indentures syllable by syllable. Certain lands were granted for certain services; which services have been neglected. I would not in such wise neglect the lands in question, but annex them to my royal domains.

Mary. Sister! sister! you forget that the Lady Jane Gray (as was) is now queen of the realm.

Elizabeth. Forget it indeed! The vile woman! I am minded to call her as such vile women are called out of doors.

Mary. Pray abstain; not only forasmuch as it would be unseemly in those sweet slender delicate lips of yours, but also by reason that she is adorned with every grace and virtue, bating (which indeed outvalues them all) the true religion. Sister! I hope and believe I in this my speech have given you no offence: for your own eyes, I know, are opened. Indeed, who that is not wilfully blind can err in so straight a road, even if so gentle and so sure a guidance were wanting? The mind, sister, the mind itself must be crooked which deviates a hair's breadth. Ay, that intelligent nod would alone suffice to set my bosom quite at rest thereupon. Should it not?

Elizabeth. It were imprudent in me to declare my real opinion at this juncture. We must step warily when we walk among cocatrices. I am barely a saint; indeed far from it; and I am much too young to be a martyr. But that odious monster, who pretends an affection for reformation, and a reverence for learning, is counting the jewels in the crown, while you fancy she is repeating her prayers, or conning her Greek.

Sister Mary! as God is in heaven, I hold nothing so detestable in a woman as hypocrisy. Add thereunto, as you fairly may, avarice, man-hunting, lasciviousness. The least atom of the least among these vices is heavy enough to weigh down the soul to the bottomless pit.

Mary. Unless divine grace . .

Elizabeth. Don't talk to me. Don't spread the filth fine.

Now could not that empty fool, Dudley, have found some other young person of equal rank with Mistress Jane, and of higher beauty? Not that any other such, pretty as the boy is, would listen to his idle discourse.

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And, pray, who are these Dudleys? The first of them was made a man of by our grandfather. And what was the man after all? Nothing better than a huge smelting-pot, with a commodious screw at the colder end of the ladle.

I have no patience with the bold harlotry.

Mary. I see you have not, sister!

Elizabeth. No, nor have the people. They are on tip-toe for rising in all parts of the kingdom.

Mary. What can they do? God help them!

Elizabeth. Sister Mary! good sister Mary! did you say *God help them?* I am trembling into a heap. It is well you have uttered such words to safe and kindred ears. If they should ever come whispered at the Privy Council, it might end badly.

I believe my visit hath been of as long continuance as may seem befitting. I must be gone.

Mary. Before your departure, let me correct a few of your opinions in regard to our gentle kinswoman and most gracious queen. She hath nobly enlarged my poor alimony. Look here! to begin.

Elizabeth. What! all golden pieces? I have not ten groats in the world,

Mary. Be sure she will grant unto you plenteously. She hath condescended to advise me of her intent. Meanwhile I do entreat you will take home with you the purse you are stroking down, thinking about other things.

Elizabeth. Not I, not I, if it comes from such a creature.

Mary. You accept it from me.

Elizabeth. Then indeed unreservedly. Passing through your hands the soil has been wiped away. However, as I live, I will carefully wash every piece in it with soap and water. Do you believe they can lose anything of their weight thereby?

Mary. Nothing material.

Elizabeth. I may reflect and cogitate upon it. I would not fain offer anybody light money.

Truth! I fear the purse, although of chamois and double-stitched, is insufficient to sustain the weight of the gold, which must be shaken violently on the road as I return. Dear sister Mary! as you probably are not about to wear that head-tire, could you, commodiously to yourself, lend it me awhile, just to deposit a certain

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part of the monies therein? for the velvet is stout, and the Venetian netting close and stiff: I can hardly bend the threads. I shall have more leisure to admire its workmanship at home.

Mary. Elizabeth! I see you are grown forgiving. In the commencement of our discourse I suggested a slight alteration of manner in speaking of our father. Do you pray for the repose of his soul morning and night?

Elizabeth. The doubt is injurious.

Mary. Pardon me! I feel it. But the voices of children, O Elizabeth! come to the ear of God above all other voices. The best want intercession. Pray for him, Elizabeth! pray for him.

Elizabeth. Why not? He did indeed, but he was in a passion, order my mother up the three black stairs, and he left her pretty head on the landing: but I bear him no malice for it.

Mary. Malice! The baneful word hath shot up from hell in many places, but never between child and parent. In the space of that one span, on that single sod from Paradise, the serpent never trailed. Husband and wife were severed by him, then again clashed together: brother slew brother: but parent and child stand where their Creator first placed them, and drink at the only source of pure untroubled love.

Elizabeth. Beside, you know, being king, he had clearly a right to do it, plea or no plea.

Mary. We will converse no longer on so dolorous a subject.

Elizabeth. I will converse on it as long as such is my pleasure.

Mary. Being my visitor, you command here.

Elizabeth. I command nowhere. I am blown about like a leaf: I am yielding as a feather in a cushion, only one among a million. But I tell you, honestly and plainly, I do not approve of it anyhow! It may have grown into a trick and habit with him: no matter for that: in my view of the business, it is not what a husband ought to do with a wife. And, if she did . . . but she did not . . . and I say it.

Mary. It seems indeed severe.

Elizabeth. Yea, afore God, methinks it smacks a trifle of the tart.

Mary. Our father was God's vicegerent. Probably it is for the good of her soul, poor lady! Better suffer here than hereafter. We ought to kiss the rod, and be thankful.

Elizabeth. Kiss the rod, forsooth. I have been constrained ere-

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while even unto that; and no such a child neither. But I would rather have kissed it fresh and fair, with all its buds and knots upon it, than after it had bestowed on me, in such a roundabout way, such a deal of its embroidery and lace-work. I thank my father for all that. I hope his soul lies easier than my skin did.

Mary. The wish is kind; but prayers would much help it. Our father of blessed memory, now (let us hope) among the saints, was somewhat sore in his visitations; but they tended heavenward.

Elizabeth. Yea, when he cursed and cuffed and kicked us.

Mary. He did kick, poor man!

Elizabeth. Kick! Fifty folks, young and old, have seen the marks his kicking left behind.

Mary. We should conceal all such his infirmities. They arose from an irritation in the foot, whereof he died.

Elizabeth. I only know I could hardly dance or ride for them; chiefly caught, as I was, fleeing from his wrath. He seldom vouchsafed to visit me: when he did, he pinched my ear so bitterly, I was fain to squeel. And then he said, I should turn out like my mother, calling me by such a name moreover as is heard but about the kennel; and even there it is never given to the young.

Mary. There was choler in him at certain times and seasons. Those who have much will, have their choler excited when opposite breath blows against it.

Elizabeth. Let them have will; let them have choler too, in God's name; but it is none the better, as gout is, for flying to hand or foot.

Mary. I have seen . . . now do, pray forgive me . . .

Elizabeth. Well, what have you seen?

Mary. My sweet little sister lift up the most delicate of all delicate white hands, and with their tiny narrow pink nails tear off ruffs and caps, and take sundry unerring aims at eyes and noses.

Elizabeth. Was that any impediment or hindrance to riding and dancing? I would always make people do their duty, and always will. Remember (for your memory seems accurate enough) that, whenever I scratched anybody's face, I permitted my hand to be kissed by the offender within a day or two.

Mary. Undeniable.

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Elizabeth. I may, peradventure, have been hasty in my childhood: but all great hearts are warm; all good ones are relenting. If, in combing my hair, the hussy lugged it, I obeyed God's command, and referred to the *lex talionis.* I have not too much of it; and every soul on earth sees its beauty. A single one would be a public loss. Uncle Seymour . . but what boots it? there are others who can see perhaps as far as uncle Seymour.

Mary. I do remember his saying that he watched its growth as he would a melon's. And how fondly did those little sharp grey eyes of his look and wink when you blushed and chided his flattery.

Elizabeth. Never let any man dare to flatter me: I am above it. Only the weak and ugly want the refreshment of that perfumed fan. I take but my own; and touch it who dares.

Really it is pleasant to see in what a pear-form fashion both purse and cawl are hanging. Faith! they are heavy: I could hardly lift them from the back of the chair.

Mary. Let me call an attendant to carry them for you.

Elizabeth. Are you mad? They are unsealed, and ill-tied: anyone could slip his hand in.

And so that . . the word was well nigh out of my mouth . . gave you all this gold?

Mary. For shame! O for shame!

Elizabeth. I feel shame only for her. It turns my cheeks red . . together with some anger upon it. But I can not keep my eyes off that book, if book it may be, on which the purse was lying.

Mary. Somewhat irreverently, God forgive me! But it was sent at the same time by the same fair creature, with many kind words. It had always been kept in our father's bedroom-closet, and was removed from Edward's by those unhappy men who superintended his education.

Elizabeth. She must have thought all those stones are garnets: to me they look like rubies, one and all. Yet, over so large a cover, they cannot all be rubies.

Mary. I believe they are, excepting the glory in the centre, which is composed of chrysolites. Our father was an excellent judge in jewellery, as in everything else, and he spared no expenditure in objects of devotion.

Elizabeth. What creature could fail in devotion with an object

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such as that before the eyes? Let me kiss it . . partly for my Saviour's and partly for my father's sake.

Mary. How it comforts me, O Elizabeth, to see you thus press it to your bosom. Its spirit, I am confident, has entered there. Disregard the pebbles: take it home: cherish it evermore. May there be virtue, as some think there is, even in the stones about it! God bless you, strengthen you, lead you aright, and finally bring you to everlasting glory.

Elizabeth (*going*). The Popish puss!

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XIV. PHILIP II. AND DONA JUANA COELHO.

Juana. Condescend, O my king! to hear me.

Philip. By what means, Dona Juana, have you obtained this admission to my presence?

Juana. Sire, by right of my sex and my misfortunes.

Philip. And what misfortune of yours, pray, madam, is it in my power to remove or alleviate?

Juana. All mine, O most puissant monarch! and nearly all the heaviest that exist on earth; the providence of God having placed the larger part of the known world under the sceptre or the influence of your majesty.

Philip. And the more suffering part, no doubt. God, and his mother, and the blessed saints, have exalted me to my station, that I may bring chastisement on the perverse and rebellious, and ward it off from the dutiful and obedient. I have now little leisure: to the point then.

Juana. O sire! my husband has offended: I know not how.

Philip. Nor should you. His offence is against the state.

Juana. He has been secretary many years to your majesty; and in times and circumstances the most trying, he has ever been a faithful vassal. The riches he possesses flowed in great measure from royal bounty; none from treason, none from peculation, none from abuse of power.

Philip. Know you his steps, his thoughts?

Juana. I have always shared them.

Philip. Always? no madam. Let me tell you, he aspires too high.

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Juana. O sire! that is a generous fault, the fault of every one who loves glory, of every true Spaniard, and, above all, of Antonio Perez.

Philip. When did he first begin to look so loftily?

Juana. When first he aspired to serve your majesty.

Philip. Has he no gratitude, no sense of duty, no feeling of nothingness, as becomes a subject? I made him what he is. Tell me no more I enriched him; that is little: beside, I know not that I did it; and I could only wish to have done it, that I might undo it. I can not remember that he has had anything from me beyond the salary of his offices; but those who accept my money for any services would just as readily accept it from my enemies. They care no more from whose hand it comes, than whose effigy it bears.

Juana. He had enough and abundantly from his offices; nor indeed was he without a patrimony, nor I without a dower.

Philip. He should have minded his business; he should have taken example from Scovedo.

Juana. Sire, it becomes not me to express astonishment, or even to feel it, in the august presence.

Philip. Something very like astonishment produces good effects occasionally. Madam, would you wish further audience?

Juana. Too graciously vouchsafed me! Sire! Antonio Perez, my husband, is accused of being privy to the assassination. . . .

Philip. Unmannerly, ill-featured expression!

Juana. Of his colleague Scovedo. I come to intreat, on the part of his family and of mine, that he may be brought to trial speedily and openly. If your majesty will indulge us with this further act of royal clemency and favour, I engage that a crime so detestable, a crime from which the nature of Don Antonio is abhorrent, shall be removed for ever from our house.

Philip. At my good pleasure I may confront him with his accomplices.

Juana. Alas! alas! who are the guilty?

Philip. Who? who? (*Aside.*) Suspicious, audacious woman! Some have suspected those about the Princess of Evoli, and have watched her.

Juana. Kind soul! may never harm befall her from their wiles! Beauty, that should fill the world with light and happiness, brings only evil spirits into it, and is blighted by malignity and grief. Who upon earth could see the Princess of Evoli, and not be softened?

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Philip. The injured; the insulted.

Juana. Alas! even she then serves the purposes of the envious. From the plant that gives honey to the bee, the spider and wasp draw poison.

Philip. You know the lady very intimately.

Juana. She honours me with her notice.

Philip. She honours your husband too with her notice, does she not?

Juana. Most highly.

Philip. Then, madam, by the saints, he dies!

Juana. O sire! recall the threat!

Philip. We never threaten; we sentence.

Juana. He is innocent! By the beloved of God! by the Fountain of Truth and Purity! he is innocent!

Philip. And she too! and she too! marvel of virtue! A brazen breast would split with laughter. She! Evoli! Evoli!

Juana. Is as innocent as he. O sire! this beautiful and gentle lady . . .

Philip. Ay, ay, very gentle; she brings men's heads to the scaffold if they have ever lain in her lap.

Juana. The unsuspicious, generous princess . . .

Philip. Killed the poor fool Scovedo.

Juana. Pardon me, sire! she hardly knew him, and bore no ill-will toward him.

Philip. Nor toward Perez; at worst, not very spiteful. Dead secretaries and dead rats should drive off living ones. He was useful to me, I mean Scovedo, even when alive; I can not afford one like him every day. Do you hear, Dona Juana?

Juana. Perfectly, sire.

Philip. And understand?

Juana. As well as I dare.

Philip. Could you live in privacy, with your accomplishments and your beauty?

Juana. Alas! I wish it had always been my lot!

Philip. I may promote you to that enviable situation.

Juana. My husband, now he has lost the countenance of your majesty, would retreat with me from the world.

Philip. It is not in open places that serpents hatch their eggs. God protects me: I must protect the state: Perez is unworthy of you.

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Juana. Sire, if I thought him so, I would try to make him worthy.

Philip. There are offences that women can not pardon.

Juana. Then they should retire, and learn how.

Philip. That insolent and ungrateful man wrongs and despises you. He too, among the rest, presumes to love the Princess of Evoli.

Juana. Who does not?

Philip. Who shall dare? Perez, I tell you again, has declared his audacious passion to her!

Juana. Then God forgive him his impetuosity and sinfulness! If she rejected him, he is punished.

Philip. If! . . if! Do you pretend, do you imagine, she would listen to one like him? Do you reason about it; do you calculate on it; do you sigh and weep at it, as if in your spite and stupidity you could believe it! By the blood of the martyrs, I will drain the last drop of that traitor's! Off! unclasp my knee! I can not wait for the words in your throat!

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XV. DANTE AND BEATRICE.

Dante. When you saw me profoundly pierced with love, and reddening and trembling, did it become you, did it become you, you whom I have always called *the most gentle Bice*, to join in the heartless laughter of those girls around you? Answer me. Reply unhesitatingly. Requires it so long a space for dissimulation and duplicity? Pardon! pardon! pardon! My senses have left me: my heart being gone, they follow.

Beatrice. Childish man! pursuing the impossible.

Dante. And was it this you laughed at? We can not touch the hem of God's garment; yet we fall at his feet and weep.

Beatrice. But weep not, gentle Dante! fall not before the weakest of his creatures, willing to comfort, unable to relieve you. Consider a little. Is laughter at all times the signal or the precursor of derision? I smiled, let me avow it, from the pride I felt in your preference of me; and if I laughed, it was to conceal my sentiments. Did you never cover sweet fruit with worthless leaves? Come, do not drop again so soon so faint a smile. I will not have you grave, nor very serious. I pity you; I must not love you: if I might, I would.

Dante. Yet how much love is due to me, O Bice, who have loved you, as you well remember, even from your tenth year. But it is reported, and your words confirm it, that you are going to be married.

Beatrice. If so, and if I could have laughed at that, and if my laughter could have estranged you from me, would you blame me?

Dante. Tell me the truth.

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Beatrice. The report is general.

Dante. The truth! the truth! Tell me, Bice.

Beatrice. Marriages, it is said, are made in heaven.

Dante. Is heaven then under the paternal roof?

Beatrice. It has been to me hitherto.

Dante. And now you seek it elsewhere.

Beatrice. I seek it not. The wiser choose for the weaker. Nay, do not sigh so. What would you have, my grave pensive Dante? What can I do?

Dante. Love me.

Beatrice. I always did.

Dante. Love me? O bliss of heaven!

Beatrice. No, no, no! Forbear! Men's kisses are always mischievous and hurtful; everybody says it. If you truly loved me, you would never think of doing so.

Dante. Nor even this!

Beatrice. You forget that you are no longer a boy; and that it is not thought proper at your time of life to continue the arm at all about the waist. Beside, I think you would better not put your head against my bosom; it beats too much to be pleasant to you. Why do you wish it? why fancy it can do you any good? It grows no cooler: it seems to grow even hotter. O! how it burns! Go, go; it hurts me too: it struggles, it aches, it sobs. Thank you, my gentle friend, for removing your brow away; your hair is very thick and long; and it began to heat me more than you can imagine. While it was there, I could not see your face so well, nor talk with you so quietly.

Dante. O! when shall we talk quietly in future?

Beatrice. When I am married. I shall often come to visit my father. He has always been solitary since my mother's death, which happened in my infancy, long before you knew me.

Dante. How can he endure the solitude of his house when you have left it?

Beatrice. The very question I asked him.

Dante. You did not then wish to . . to . . go away?

Beatrice. Ah no! It is sad to be an outcast at fifteen.

Dante. An outcast?

Beatrice. Forced to leave a home.

Dante. For another?

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Beatrice. Childhood can never have a second.

Dante. But childhood is now over.

Beatrice. I wonder who was so malicious as to tell my father that? He wanted me to be married a whole year ago.

Dante. And, Bice, you hesitated?

Beatrice. No; I only wept. He is a dear good father. I never disobeyed him but in those wicked tears; and they ran the faster the more he reprehended them.

Dante. Say, who is the happy youth?

Beatrice. I know not who ought to be happy if you are not.

Dante. I?

Beatrice. Surely you deserve all happiness.

Dante. Happiness! any happiness is denied me. Ah, hours of childhood! bright hours! what fragrant blossoms ye unfold! what bitter fruits to ripen!

Beatrice. Now can not you continue to sit under that old fig-tree at the corner of the garden? It is always delightful to me to think of it.

Dante. Again you smile: I wish I could smile too.

Beatrice. You were usually more grave than I, although very often, two years ago, you told me I was the graver. Perhaps I *was* then indeed; and perhaps I ought to be now: but really I must smile at the recollection, and make you smile with me.

Dante. Recollection of what in particular?

Beatrice. Of your ignorance that a fig-tree is the brittlest of trees, especially when it is in leaf; and moreover of your tumble, when your head was just above the wall, and your hand (with the verses in it) on the very coping-stone. Nobody suspected that I went every day to the bottom of our garden, to hear you repeat your poetry on the other side; nobody but yourself: you soon found me out. But on that occasion I thought you might have been hurt; and I clambered up our high peach-tree in the grass-plot nearest the place; and thence I saw Messer Dante, with his white sleeve reddened by the fig-juice, and the seeds sticking to it pertinaciously, and Messer blushing, and trying to conceal his calamity, and still holding the verses. They were all about me.

Dante. Never shall any verse of mine be uttered from my lips, or from the lips of others, without the memorial of Bice.

Beatrice. Sweet Dante! in the purity of your soul shall Bice live;

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as (we are told by the goat-herds and foresters) poor creatures have been found preserved in the serene and lofty regions of the Alps, many years after the breath of life had left them. Already you rival Guido Cavalcante and Cino da Pistoja: you must attempt, nor perhaps shall it be vainly, to surpass them in celebrity.

Dante. If ever I am above them . . and I must be . . I know already what angel's hand will have helped me up the ladder. Beatrice, I vow to heaven, shall stand higher than Selvaggia, high and glorious and immortal as that name will be. You have given me joy and sorrow; for the worst of these (I will not say the least) I will confer on you all the generations of our Italy, all the ages of our world. But first (alas, from me you must not have it!) may happiness, long happiness, attend you!

Beatrice. Ah! those words rend your bosom! why should they?

Dante. I could go away contented, or almost contented, were I sure of it. Hope is nearly as strong as despair, and greatly more pertinacious and enduring. You have made me see clearly that you never can be mine in this world: but at the same time, O Beatrice, you have made me see quite as clearly that you may and must be mine in another. I am older than you: precedency is given to age, and not to worthiness, in our way to heaven. I will watch over you; I will pray for you when I am nearer to God, and purified from the stains of earth and mortality. He will permit me to behold you, lovely as when I left you. Angels in vain should call me onward.

Beatrice. Hush, sweetest Dante! hush!

Dante. It is there, where I shall have caught the first glimpse of you again, that I wish all my portion of Paradise to be assigned me; and there, if far below you, yet within the sight of you, to establish my perdurable abode.

Beatrice. Is this piety? Is this wisdom? O Dante! And may not I be called away first?

Dante. Alas! alas! how many small feet have swept off the early dew of life, leaving the path black behind them! But to think that you should go before me! It almost sends me forward on my way, to receive and welcome you. If indeed, O Beatrice, such should be God's immutable will, sometimes look down on me when the song to Him is suspended. Oh! look often on me with prayer and pity; for there all prayers are accepted, and all pity is devoid of pain. Why are you silent?

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Beatrice. It is very sinful not to love all creatures in the world. But is it true, O Dante! that we always love those the most who make us the most unhappy?

Dante. The remark, I fear, is just.

Beatrice. Then, unless the Virgin be pleased to change my inclinations, I shall begin at last to love my betrothed; for already the very idea of him renders me sad, wearisome, and comfortless. Yesterday he sent me a bunch of violets. When I took them up, delighted as I felt at that sweetest of odours, which you and I once inhaled together . .

Dante. And only once.

Beatrice. You know why. Be quiet now, and hear me. I dropped the posy; for around it, hidden by various kinds of foliage, was twined the bridal necklace of pearls. O Dante! how worthless are the finest of them (and there are many fine ones) in comparison with those little pebbles, some of which (for perhaps I may not have gathered up all) may be still lying under the peach-tree, and some (do I blush to say it?) under the fig. Tell me not who threw these, nor for what. But you know you were always thoughtful, and sometimes reading, sometimes writing, and sometimes forgetting me, while I waited to see the crimson cap, and the two bay-leaves I fastened in it, rise above the garden-wall. How silently you are listening, if you do listen!

Dante. Oh! could my thoughts incessantly and eternally dwell among these recollections, undisturbed by any other voice . . undistracted by any other presence! Soon must they abide with me alone, and be repeated by none but me . . repeated in the accents of anguish and despair! Why could you not have held in the sad home of your heart that necklace and those violets?

Beatrice. My Dante! we must all obey . . I my father, you your God. He will never abandon you.

Dante. I have ever sung, and will for ever sing, the most glorious of His works: and yet, O Bice! He abandons me, He casts me off; and He uses your hand for this infliction.

Beatrice. Men travel far and wide, and see many on whom to fix or transfer their affections; but we maidens have neither the power nor the will. Casting our eyes on the ground, we walk along the straight and narrow road prescribed for us; and, doing thus, we avoid in great measure the thorns and entanglements of life. We

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know we are performing our duty; and the fruit of this knowledge is contentment. Season after season, day after day, you have made me serious, pensive, meditative, and almost wise. Being so little a girl, I was proud that you, so much taller, should lean on my shoulder to overlook my work. And greatly more proud was I when in time you taught me several Latin words, and then whole sentences, both in prose and verse, pasting a strip of paper over, or obscuring with impenetrable ink, those passages in the poets which were beyond my comprehension, and might perplex me. But proudest of all was I when you began to reason with me. What will now be my pride if you are convinced by the first arguments I ever have opposed to you; or if you only take them up and try if they are applicable. Certainly do I know (indeed, indeed I do) that even the patience to consider them will make you happier. Will it not then make me so? I entertain no other wish. Is not this true love?

Dante. Ah yes! the truest, the purest, the least perishable, but not the sweetest. Here are the rue and hyssop; but where the rose!

Beatrice. Wicked must be whatever torments you: and will you let love do it? Love is the gentlest and kindest breath of God. Are you willing that the Tempter should intercept it, and respire it polluted into your ear? Do not make me hesitate to pray to the Virgin for you, nor tremble lest she look down on you with a reproachful pity. To her alone, O Dante! dare I confide all my thoughts. Lessen not my confidence in my only refuge.

Dante. God annihilate a power so criminal! O, could my love flow into your breast with hers! It should flow with equal purity.

Beatrice. You have stored my little mind with many thoughts; dear because they are yours, and because they are virtuous. May I not, O my Dante! bring some of them back again to your bosom; as the *Contadina* lets down the string from the cottage-beam in winter, and culls a few bunches of the soundest for the master of the vineyard? You have not given me glory that the world should shudder at its eclipse. To prove that I am worthy of the smallest part of it, I must obey God; and, under God, my father. Surely the voice of Heaven comes to us audibly from a parent's lips. You will be great, and, what is above all greatness, good.

Dante. Rightly and wisely, my sweet Beatrice, have you spoken in this estimate. Greatness is to goodness what gravel is to por-

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phyry: the one is a moveable accumulation, swept along the surface of the earth; the other stands fixed and solid and alone, above the violence of war and of the tempest; above all that is residuous of a wasted world. Little men build up great ones; but the snow colossus soon melts: the good stand under the eye of God; and therefore stand.

Beatrice. Now you are calm and reasonable, listen to Bice. You must marry.

Dante. Marry?

Beatrice. Unless you do, how can we meet again unreservedly? Worse, worse than ever! I can not bear to see those large heavy tears following one another, heavy and slow as nuns at the funeral of a sister. Come, I will kiss off one, if you will promise me faithfully to shed no more. Be tranquil, be tranquil; only hear reason. There are many who know you; and all who know you must love you. Don't you hear me? Why turn aside? and why go farther off? I will have that hand. It twists about as if it hated its confinement. Perverse and peevish creature! you have no more reason to be sorry than I have; and you have many to the contrary which I have not. Being a man, you are at liberty to admire a variety, and to make a choice. Is that no comfort to you?

Dante.

Bid this bosom cease to grieve?
  Bid these eyes fresh objects see?
Where's the comfort to believe
  None might once have rivall'd me?
What! my freedom to receive?
  Broken hearts, are they the free?
For another can I live
  When I may not live for thee?

Beatrice. I will never be fond of you again if you are so violent. We have been together too long, and we may be noticed.

Dante. Is this our last meeting? If it is . . and that it is, my heart has told me . . you will not, surely you will not refuse . .

Beatrice. Dante! Dante! they make the heart sad after: do not wish it. But prayers . . O, how much better are they! how much quieter and lighter they render it! They carry it up to heaven with them; and those we love are left behind no longer.

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XVI. QUEEN ELIZABETH, CECIL, DUKE OF ANJOU, AND DE LA MOTTE FÉNELON.

Elizabeth. You are only nineteen, M. D'Anjou: I, as all the world knows, am bordering on thirty.

La Motte (*aside*). Thirty-nine, that is. (Pretty bordering.)

Elizabeth (*continuing*). If in fifteen or twenty years, sooner or later, I should haply lose a part of those personal charms which, for the benefit of my people, God's providence hath so bountifully bestowed on me, and which your partial eye hath multiplied; if they should wane, and their power over your gentle heart become fainter . . die I must; die of grief; the grievousest of grief; the loss of your affection.

Anjou. Impossible! Such charms perish! wane! decline! in fifteen or twenty years!

La Motte (*aside*). They have all been gone the best part of the time.

Anjou. Angelic vision! I am unworthy of them; Earth may be so too. Death alone can deprive her of their radiance; but the angels can be happy without them; and mankind hath not so sinned a second time as to deserve a deluge, a universal deluge of tears for which no ark hath been provided.

Elizabeth (*to Cecil*). He speaks well, rationally, religiously: but, Cecil! the inches are wanting.

Anjou. A few years are as unlikely to produce a change on that countenance of a seraph, as eternity is to produce it in my passion.

Elizabeth. I can not but smile at you, my sweet cousin! But surely you mock me. Do my features (which, alas! like my heart, were ever too flexible) seem to you so settled?

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Anjou. Not otherwise than as the stars above are settled in the firmament.

Elizabeth. Believe it or not believe it, I have been more beautiful.

La Motte (*aside*). No heretic will ever be burnt for disputing the verity of that article.

Anjou. More beautiful still?

Elizabeth. Ay truly, two years ago.

Anjou. Truth is powerful; but modesty is powerfuller. Here indeed Truth flies before her. For this uncourteous speech, thus extorted from me, on my knees do I crave your pardon, O gracious queen! O empress of my heart!

Elizabeth. I increase in glory by that application.

Anjou. I have always heard that the lofty of both sexes love the less in stature, and that the beautiful are partial to the plain.

Elizabeth. Am I plain? false traitor! I could almost find it in my heart to beat you, for changing your tone so suddenly.

Anjou. That gracious glance could heal even wounds inflicted by the rack, and turn agonies into ecstacies. I spake (alas too truly!) of myself. Whatever are the graces which the world sees in my person, I am shorter than several in the courts of France and England. Indeed I never saw so many personable men before, as I have seen about your Majesty.

Elizabeth (*aside*). He has caught some of his brother Henry's jealousy: maybe he hath spied at Dudley: maybe he hath heard of the admiral and . . the rest.

Sir! my cousin! they are well enough: that is, they are well enough for grooms, and servitors about the house.

Anjou. Your Majesty is now looking at those unfortunate holes and seams left all over my face by the small-pox.

Elizabeth. Dimples! dimples! hiding-places of Love.

La Motte! did you not assure me that there is a surgeon in London who can remove them all?

La Motte. And most truly. I have conversed with him myself, and have seen many whose faces he hath put into repair. You would believe that the greater part had never had a speck upon them.

Elizabeth. Touch your face? would you let him? would you suffer him to alter one feature, one component of feature, in that countenance?

Anjou. My mother has insisted that it might be improved.

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Elizabeth. My dear sister the Queen Catarina is the wisest of queens and of women. A mother so perspicacious might espy a defect, when another of equal perspicacity (if any such existed) could find none.

(*To Cecil.*) What a monkey! How hideous! and how vain! worst of all!

Cecil. His Highness hath much penetration.

Elizabeth. But the inches! Cecil! the inches!

Anjou. I perceive your Majesty has been comparing my stature with my lord Burleigh's. I wish indeed I resembled his lordship in figure and dignity. I would gladly be half an inch taller.

Elizabeth. Men never are contented. You are between five and six feet high.

(*Aside.*) Eleven inches from six though.

Anjou. If my highth is unobjectionable, my heart is quite at ease: for it has been certified to me that the surgeon can render my face as smooth as . .

Elizabeth (*aside*). The outside of an oyster-shell.

Anjou. And should he fail, should he peradventure, my beard in another year will overgrow the marks.

Elizabeth (*to Cecil*). Such creatures are usually born with beards from chin to eyebrow, and from eyebrow to nose.

(*To Anjou.*) Beards so comprehensive add more to majesty than to comeliness.

(*To Cecil.*) 'Fore Gad! Cecil, I would not have him for a husband, were he ten inches taller, and ten wider across the shoulders. To gratify my beloved people, on whom all my thoughts are bent, I must look narrowly to the succession, seeing that from my body must descend the issue of their future kings. We want the inches, Cecil! we verily do want the inches. My father was a portly man, Cecil! and my grandfather, albeit spare, was wirily elastic. For reasons of state, I would never have my sister Mary's widower. The nation might possibly have been disappointed in the succession, and I should have wasted away among the bleeding hearts of my people. Say something to the man, and let him go. Were there the inches . . but we must not press upon that point.

Cecil. May it please your Majesty, ten or a dozen in highth and breadth would cover a multitude of sins, and almost atone for the mass.

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Elizabeth. At him upon that!

Anjou. I do perceive there are difficulties; but I humbly trust that none of them are insurmountable.

Elizabeth. Excuse my maidenly sighs, sweet cousin!

La Motte (*aside*). No sighs of that description have escaped her since she was fourteen. The first and last of them caught the sails of the High Admiral, and cast him on the breakers.

Anjou. Those tender breathings, most gracious lady, seem to arise from my breast, and to murmur on your lips; those beauteous lips which may soften or shorten the thread of my destiny.

Elizabeth. Faith and troth, Cecil, this rogue duke possesses a vast treasury of jewelled language. The boy is well educated and hath much discernment. It would cost no ordinary poet half a day's labour, and the better part of his ten nails, to have devised what our cousin hath spoken off-hand.

(*To Anjou.*) Sir, my cousin! of all the princes who have wooed me, none so well knows the avenues to my heart as you do. I beseech you, urge me no further in this moment of my weakness. The woman who avoweth her love loseth her lover. Forbear! O forbear! have patience! leave my wits to settle! Time, too clearly I perceive it, will only rivet my chains.

La Motte (*to Anjou*). He hath taken his leisure in forging them, and hath left them brittle at last.

Anjou (*to La Motte*). Forty-nine years! Women of that age have bent down their spectacles over the cradles of their great-grandchildren. In God's name, La Motte! how much older do they ever grow?

Elizabeth. What did I overhear of children? The Lord vouchsafe us whatever number of girls it may please his Divine Providence! I would implore of it, in addition, only just two boys; one for France, and one for England.

La Motte. We can not be quite happy with fewer than four girls, may it please your majesty.

Elizabeth. It pleaseth me well: and I see no difficulty in inserting so discreet a prayer in our Litany. But why four? why four precisely?

La Motte. May it please your majesty! in order to represent their mother and the Graces. In the first I have presumed to mention, the cardinal virtues have already their representative.

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Cecil. M. De La Motte Fénelon! her majesty has been graciously pleased to impose on me her royal command, that I should express her majesty's deep sorrow (since she herself is incapable in this presence of expressing any such sentiment) at the strange misadventure, the sad untoward demise, of so many Protestant lords and gentlemen, in his most Christian majesty's good city of Paris, on the feast of St. Bartholomew last past. And her most gracious majesty, in the tenderness of her royal heart, urged by the cries and clamours of her loving subjects, would remonstrate, however blandly, thereupon. In order to pacify her people, who are dearer to her than life, and in order that no delay whatever may be interposed to your forthcoming nuptials, her majesty would fain insure your highness's compliance with the established religion of the realm; and is ready to accept any valid security, that your and her royal progeny (the first-born and second-born son especially) be educated in the same. The daughters, in course, follow the footsteps of the mother.

Anjou. My children can receive no better instruction than from their most religious and accomplished mother. I am tolerant of all religions; and to give a proof of it, I am going to fight for the Protestants in the Low-Countries.

Elizabeth (*to Cecil*). Do not let him go: he will obtain great influence over them, and curtail our traffic and taxes.

(*To Anjou.*) O Anjou! Anjou! O my beloved Francis! do you, must you, can you, leave us? My sobs choke me. Is war, is even glory, preferable to love? Alas! alas! you can not answer me: you know not what love is. O imperfection of speech! In the presence of Anjou to separate war and glory! But when will you return?

Anjou. Before the end of next month at farthest.

Elizabeth. What years, what ages, roll within that period! My heart is already on the ocean with you, swelling more tumultuously. The danger I most dread is from the elements; no other enemy is great enough to hurt you. Only look from the window! The waves are beating and roaring against our town of Sandwich, ready to engulf it.

Anjou. Sweet lady! the sun is shining on the eighth of February as brightly as it ever shone on May before. But shines it not at this moment on May?

Elizabeth. Flatterer! deceiver! I am shipwrecked and lost already. Adieu! adieu! . . . must I only say . . *my cousin!*

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Anjou. She is gone . . God be praised! why did not you tell me, Fénelon! what a hyæna the creature is? Her smile cured me at once of love-qualms.

La Motte. She is not so amiss. Really she was well-looking no longer than some twenty years ago. But every woman has been several women if she has lived long. The English at this hour call her handsome.

Anjou. The English may be good historians; they are bad grammarians; they confound the preterite and the present. Beside, to call her otherwise, would cost the best among them his head. How many days ago is it that she chopped off the hand of the most eloquent and honest man in her universities, for disapproving of her intended marriage with me? and yet he praised her and spoke affectionately. What prince, whether in modern times or ancient, ever inflicted so many and such atrocious pains and penalties, or ever expected such enormous sums in proportion to the ability of the people? But in England the pack is well whipt in, and always follows the first hound at full cry, muzzle to hoof. The English have belief for everything but religion: there they would run wild; only a few good Catholics whimper and sit quiet. Englishmen verily believe the queen loves them tenderly, while they see one after another led with the halter round their necks up the ladder, some wanting their ears, some their noses, and some their hands. Talk to me of St. Bartholomew's day! The dead upon that day died whole.

What stomachs have these islanders! The Lord High Admiral well deserved his commission; but he was braver on land than at sea.

La Motte. The English drink valiantly, and do not see clearly small defects in beauty by bedtime. They are hale, and deem it unmeet and unmanly to be squeamish.

Anjou. So it appears, by what my brother told me, and by what (as we know) went against the grain with him. But he was heir-apparent. If Dudley had been a gentleman by descent, Charles perhaps might not have so taken to heart his precedency.

La Motte. She has points about her.

Anjou. Ay truly; too many. Were her nose but awry, she might see to read through it. Then (mercy upon us!) those long narrow ferret's teeth, intersecting a face of such proportions, that it

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is like a pared cucumber set on end. And then those foxy eyelashes and eyebrows! And those wild-fire eyes, equal in volubility to her tongue and her affections, and leering like a panther's when it yawns. Gramercy! the fellow who pretends he can fill up the trenches and pitfalls in my face, may try his hand at hers; I never will. Sacre! the skinny old goshawk, all talon and plumage. By St. Martin! I would not have her . . no, not even to nail against my stable-door. I do not wonder that Dudley requires a couple of wives to take the taste of this wormwood out of his mouth. My wonder is, that he should have been at the trouble to murder the same number of handsome ones to make room for her. I myself would have done a good deal, perhaps as much, or nearly so, to get a kingdom! but my charger could never overleap this bar. No, La Motte! I must be contented with the Netherlands.

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XVII. MARY AND BOTHWELL.

Mary. Bothwell! Bothwell! what would you have? I can hardly believe my senses. It was wrong, it was very wrong indeed, to commit such an outrage. You forget my condition, my station, and what you owe me . . the allegiance, the duty . .

Bothwell. Nay, nay, my gracious queen! I thought of nothing else all our ride. What a sweet fresh colour it has given my royal mistress! O! could the ugly Elizabeth but see it! I should hail you queen of England the next hour.

Mary. How dare you call my cousin ugly? and to my face! And do you think she would give the crown of England to look at me? O you silly man! But what can you mean?

Bothwell. I mean, she would burst and crack at it, like a dry and gnarly log of mountain-ash on a Christmas hearth.

Mary. At me! at my colour! I can not help laughing at your absurdity, most wicked, flattering, deceiving creature!

Bothwell. I flatter! I deceive! I never try to do what I am likely to fail in: here I must: here all must.

Mary. I wish you had indeed failed altogether.

Bothwell. So then, my royal dove! I did not quite?

Mary. Impudent man! go away.

Ah Bothwell! you are now a traitor after this. They would treat you like one. The laws call it abduction . . and God knows what beside.

Bothwell. Treat me like a traitor! me! the truest man among them. Yea, if I would let them, and this fair hand could sign it.

Mary. O heaven! Do not talk so; you make me very sad. I will never be so cruel to you as you have been to me.

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Bothwell. The laws too; the laws forsooth! Neither in our country, nor in any other, do the laws touch anything higher than the collar of the most diminutive thief: and a lawyer is always at hand to change his coat and character with him for a groat.

Mary. With what derision and scorn you speak of laws and lawyers! You little know how vindictive they are.

Bothwell. Faith! we are not well acquainted; but I know enough of them to know that.

Mary. Are not you afraid?

Bothwell. I tremble in the presence of majesty and beauty. Where they are, there lies my law. I do confess I am afraid, and hugely; for I feel hard knockings (there must surely be all the Pandects) where my heart was lately.

Mary. You never had any heart, or you would not have treated me in this manner.

Bothwell. You shall want nothing with me: you shall never pine after the past.

Mary. Ah but! ah but! indeed, indeed, good Bothwell! he was very handsome; and you must acknowledge it . . if he had only been less cross and jealous and wayward and childish . .

Bothwell. Too childish by half for you, fair lady! and he was all those other little things beside.

Mary. What is over is over! God forgive you, bad man! Sinner! serpent! it was all you. And you dare smile! Shame upon you, varlet! Yes; now you look as you should do. Nobody ought to be more contrite. You may speak again, if you will only speak to the purpose. Come; no wicked thoughts! I mean if you will speak reasonably. But you really are a very, very wicked man indeed.

Bothwell. Happy the man who hears those blessed words! they grow but on soft sweet lips, fresh pouting from ardent pressure.

Mary. If you presume to talk so, I will kill myself. Are you not ashamed?

Bothwell. My blushes quite consume me: I feel my hair crackle on my head: my beard would burn my fingers.

Mary. I will not laugh, sirrah!

Bothwell. No, my most gracious lady! in mercy stop half-way! that smile is quite sufficient.

Mary. Do you fancy I am capable of smiling? I am quite

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serious. You have carried me away, and now you have nothing to do but to take me back again.

Bothwell. It would be dangerous: you have too many enemies.

Mary. I do not mind them while you are with me. Am I wild? You have frightened me so I scarcely know what I say.

Bothwell. A part of your understanding, most gracious lady! seems at last to have fallen on me.

Mary. Whither now would you carry me? You know it is quite against my will: absolute downright force.

Bothwell. Pardon, sweet lady! pardon my excess of zeal and devotion, my unutterable . .

Mary. What?

Bothwell. Love.

Mary. A subject's is loyalty. Love indeed!

Bothwell. Let me perish, but not against an iceberg.

Mary. Ah, bold cruel man! this is scoffing. Does it end *so!*

Bothwell. Nay, never let it end *so;* never let it end at all; let one thing under heaven be eternal.

Mary. As if I, so helpless a creature, could order it.

Bothwell. What have the Powers above denied you?

Mary. Happiness, innocence, peace. No, they did not deny them. Bothwell! Bothwell! they were mine; were they not?

Bothwell. And good things they are, no doubt; but there are other good things beside; all which you possess, and these too. These should not always be shut up in the casket. Where there are peace and happiness, there is sure to be innocence; for what else can anyone wish? but those who can bring them into the hearts of others, and will not, I never will call innocent. I do not remember that any living person has entreated me and met with a refusal.

Mary. Ah! such men may be beloved, but can not love. What is that to me? It is unbecoming in me to reason with a profligate, or to listen any longer. You have often run then into such courses?

Bothwell. Alas! from my youth upward I have always been liable to these paroxysms.

Mary. For shame! I do not understand a single word of what you are saying. Again I ask you, and I insist upon an answer, whither are you conducting me?

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Bothwell. To freedom, to safety, to the protection of a dutiful subject, to the burning heart of a gallant man.

Mary. I am frightened out of my senses at the mere mention of any such things. What can you possibly mean? I never knew the like. I will not hear of it, you rebel! And you dare already . .

Bothwell. Do you look so sternly on me, when you yourself have reduced me to this extremity? And now, worse! worse! do you deprive me of the last breath, by turning away from me those eyes, the bright unerring stars of my destiny?

Mary. If they had any power (but they have none!) I would strike you almost dead with them for that audacity. Again? O madman! madman! madman!

Bothwell. To mistake the lips for the hand! hallucination!

Mary. Now if you should (and you must!) be overtaken!

Bothwell. You would deliver me up to death and ignominy?

Mary. Our pure religion teaches us forgiveness.

Bothwell.

> Then by my troth is it pure and bright
> As a pewter plate on a Saturday night.

Here is a stave of my own to its honour and glory.

Mary. You sing too?

Bothwell. Yes; but I am no tenor.

Mary (*aside*). Ah! sweet soul! thou* wert gentle, fond, and faithful!

Bothwell (*catching the last word*). Capital for the faithful: and moreover it is the cleverest and rarest religion in the world. Few, even of the adventurously pious, so far interfere with the attributes of the Almighty as to take pardon into their own hands . . unless for offences against others. There indeed they find as little difficulty in practising as in preaching.

Mary. I am quite edified at seeing you grow so serious. I once heard that you had abandoned the religion of your ancestors.

Bothwell. I did not abandon it; it dropped off me unaware. Now to prove my constancy, I never would take another. It is hard that a man like me should be accused of irreligion. They may do anything with me they like, if they will only let me be quiet. I am long-suffering: I never preach again.

* Thinking of Rizzio.

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Mary. Well; at least you have not fallen into heresy? you are not malignant?

Bothwell. By Jupiter! no; neither the one nor the other. Sweet gracious lady! how could you suspect me?

Mary. Because you men are so violent and so fond of change. You will never hear reason; you will never do your duty.

Bothwell. By the stars above! I will do mine before I ever presume to pray again.

Mary. And so, you dare to swear and laugh in my presence! I do really think, Bothwell, you are one of the most impudent men I ever met withal.

Bothwell. Ah, my beloved lady!

Mary. Stop, stop! I shall not let you say that.

Bothwell. My most gracious queen and mistress!

Mary. You are now, I believe, within the rules and regulations . . that is, if you would not look up to me in such a very odd way. Modest men always look down on the eyelashes, not between them.

Bothwell. Happy the modest men, if they do.

Mary. There! now you look exactly as you should always.

Bothwell. Faint as I am and sinking betwixt fear and love, I feel that, by thus taking my hand, your Highness in part forgives and entirely pities the most unfortunate of your servants. For surely he is the most unfortunate, who, having ventured the most to serve you, has given you thereby the most offence. I do not say I hazarded my freedom; it was lost when I first beheld you: I do not say I hazarded my life; I had none until to-day: and who dares touch it on the altar where I devote it. Lady! vouchsafe to hear me!

Mary. What a rough hand you have, Bothwell! what a heavy one! and (holy Virgin!) what a vastly broad one; it would cover I don't know what! and what a briary bower of hair over-arching it! Curious! it is quite red all over; everywhere but where there is this long scar; and these two ugly warts. Do I hurt you?

Bothwell. My heart and every fibre feel it, but can well bear it.

Mary. How much whiter the back of the hand is, for a moment, by just passing two fingers over it! look! But really warts are frightful things; and scars not much better. And yet there are silly girls who, when they have nothing else to think about, could kiss them.

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Bothwell. Ay, ay; but be girls as silly as they will, I never let them play such idle tricks with me.

Mary. I am glad to hear it: I fancied you had said something very different: you must not joke; it vexes me.

Bothwell. The warts will vanish under the royal touch. As for the scar, I would not lose the scar for the crown of Scotland, in defence whereof I fairly won it.

Mary. O! you are a very brave man, but a very bold one.

Bothwell. Illiterate and ignorant as I am, I would gladly learn from the best-informed and most intellectual of God's creatures, where lies the difference.

Mary. I don't know, I don't know; I am quite bewildered. Move your hand off my knee. Do not lay your cheek there, sir!

O Bothwell! I am tired to death. Take me back! O take me back! pray do! if you have any pity.

Bothwell. Would your Highness be pleased to repose awhile, and remain by yourself in a chamber up-stairs?

Mary. I think it might do me good.

Bothwell. May I order the trustiest of the handmaidens to attend your Highness?

Mary. You may. Go, go; I thought I desired you before not to look up at me in that manner. Thank you, gentle Bothwell! I did not speak too harshly, did I? If I did, you may kiss my hand.

Bothwell. If this scar and these warts (which are fast disappearing, I perceive) are become less frightful to your Highness, might the humblest of your servitors crave permission to conduct your Highness nigh unto the chamber-door!

Mary. Ah me! where are my own women? where are my ushers?

Bothwell. Your Highness, in all your wrongs and straits, has the appointment of one supernumerary.

Mary. Be it so: I can not help myself, as you know; and the blame is all yours.

Bothwell. When your Highness is ready to receive the services of the handmaiden, how may it please your Highness that she shall know it?

Mary. Let her tap twice with her knuckles: I can open the door myself . . or she may.

Bothwell. My queen's most gracious commands shall be duly executed.

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XVIII. TASSO AND CORNELIA.

Tasso. She is dead, Cornelia! she is dead!

Cornelia. Torquato! my Torquato! after so many years of separation do I bend once more your beloved head to my embrace?

Tasso. She is dead!

Cornelia. Tenderest of brothers! bravest and best and most unfortunate of men! What, in the name of heaven! so bewilders you?

Tasso. Sister! sister! sister! I could not save her.

Cornelia. Certainly it was a sad event; and they who are out of spirits may be ready to take it for an evil omen. At this season of the year the vintagers are joyous and negligent.

Tasso. How! what is this?

Cornelia. The little girl was crushed, they say, by a wheel of the car laden with grapes, as she held out a handful of vine-leaves to one of the oxen. And did you happen to be there just at the moment?

Tasso. So then the little too can suffer! the ignorant, the indigent, the unaspiring! Poor child! She was kind-hearted, else never would calamity have befallen her.

Cornelia. I wish you had not seen the accident.

Tasso. I see it? I? I saw it not. No other is crushed where I am. The little girl died for her kindness! Natural death!

Cornelia. Be calm, be composed, my brother!

Tasso. You would not require me to be composed or calm if you comprehended a thousandth part of my sufferings.

Cornelia. Peace! peace! we know them all.

Tasso. Who has dared to name them? Imprisonment, derision, madness.

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Cornelia. Hush! sweet Torquato! If ever these existed, they are past.

Tasso. You do think they are sufferings? ay?

Cornelia. Too surely.

Tasso. No, not too surely: I will not have that answer. They would have been; but Leonora was then living. Unmanly as I am! did I complain of them? and while she was left me?

Cornelia. My own Torquato! is there no comfort in a sister's love? Is there no happiness but under the passions? Think, O my brother, how many courts there are in Italy: are the princes more fortunate than you? Which among them all loves truly, deeply, and virtuously? Among them all is there any one, for his genius, for his generosity, for his gentleness, ay, for his mere humanity, worthy to be beloved?

Tasso. Princes! talk to me of princes! How much cross-grained wood a little gypsum covers! a little carmine quite beautifies! Wet your forefinger with your spittle; stick a broken gold-leaf on the sinciput; clip off a beggar's beard to make it tresses; kiss it; fall down before it; worship it. Are you not irradiated by the light of its countenance! Princes! princes! Italian princes! Estes! What matters that costly carrion? Who thinks about it? (*After a pause.*) She is dead! She is dead!

Cornelia. We have not heard it here.

Tasso. At Sorrento you hear nothing but the light surges of the sea, and the sweet sprinkles of the guitar.

Cornelia. Suppose the worst to be true.

Tasso. Always, always.

Cornelia. If she ceases, as then perhaps she must, to love and to lament you, think gratefully, contentedly, devoutly, that her arms had clasped your neck before they were crossed upon her bosom, in that long sleep which you have rendered placid, and from which your harmonious voice shall once more awaken her. Yes, Torquato! her bosom had throbbed to yours, often and often, before the organ-peal shook the fringes round the catafalc. Is not this much, from one so high, so beautiful?

Tasso. Much? yes; for abject me. But I did so love her! so love her!

Cornelia. Ah! let the tears flow: she sends you that balm from heaven.

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Tasso. So love her did poor Tasso! Else, O Cornelia, it had indeed been much. I thought, in the simplicity of my heart, that God was as great as an emperor, and could bestow and had bestowed on me as much as the German had conferred or could confer on his vassal. No part of my insanity was ever held in such ridicule as this. And yet the idea cleaves to me strangely, and is liable to stick to my shroud.

Cornelia. Woe betide the woman who bids you to forget that woman who has loved you: she sins against her sex. Leonora was unblameable. Never think ill of her for what you have suffered.

Tasso. Think ill of her? I? I? I? No; those we love, we love for everything; even for the pain they have given us. But she gave me none: it was where she was not, that pain was.

Cornelia. Surely, if love and sorrow are destined for companionship, there is no reason why the last comer of the two should supersede the first.

Tasso. Argue with me, and you drive me into darkness. I am easily persuaded and led on while no reasons are thrown before me. With these you have made my temples throb again. Just Heaven! dost thou grant us fairer fields, and wider, for the whirlwind to lay waste? Dost thou build us up habitations above the street, above the palace, above the citadel, for the Plague to enter and carouse in? Has not my youth paid its dues, paid its penalties? Can not our griefs come first, while we have strength to bear them? The fool! the fool! who thinks it a misfortune that his love is unrequited. Happier young man! look at the violets until thou drop asleep on them. Ah! but thou must wake!

Cornelia. O heavens! what must you have suffered! for a man's heart is sensitive in proportion to its greatness.

Tasso. And a woman's?

Cornelia. Alas! I know not; but I think it can be no other. Comfort thee, comfort thee, dear Torquato!

Tasso. Then do not rest thy face upon my arm; it so reminds me of her. And thy tears too! they melt me into her grave.

Cornelia. Hear you not her voice as it appeals to you? saying to you, as the priests around have been saying to *her*, Blessed soul! rest in peace!

Tasso. I heard it not; and yet I am sure she said it. A thousand times has she repeated it, laying her hand on my heart to quiet it,

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simple girl! She told it to rest in peace . . and she went from me! Insatiable love! ever self-torturer, never self-destroyer! the world, with all its weight of miseries, can not crush thee, can not keep thee down. Generally men's tears, like the droppings of certain springs, only harden and petrify what they fall on; but mine sank deep into a tender heart, and were its very blood. Never will I believe she has left me utterly. Oftentimes, and long before her departure, I fancied we were in heaven together. I fancied it in the fields, in the gardens, in the palace, in the prison. I fancied it in the broad daylight, when my eyes were open, when blessed spirits drew around me that golden circle which one only of earth's inhabitants could enter. Oftentimes in my sleep also I fancied it; and sometimes in the intermediate state, in that serenity which breathes about the transported soul, enjoying its pure and perfect rest, a span below the feet of the Immortal!

Cornelia. She has not left you; do not disturb her peace by these repinings.

Tasso. She will bear with them. Thou knowest not what she was, Cornelia; for I wrote to thee about her while she seemed but human. In my hours of sadness, not only her beautiful form, but her very voice bent over me. How girlish in the gracefulness of her lofty form! how pliable in her majesty! what composure at my petulance and reproaches! what pity in her reproofs! Like the air that angels breathe in the metropolitan temple of the Christian world, her soul at every season preserved one temperature. But it was when she could and did love me! Unchanged must ever be the blessed one who has leaned in fond security on the unchangeable. The purifying flame shoots upward, and is the glory that encircles their brows when they meet above.

Cornelia. Indulge in these delightful thoughts, my Torquato! and believe that your love is and ought to be imperishable as your glory. Generations of men move forward in endless procession to consecrate and commemorate both. Colour-grinders and gilders, year after year, are bargained with to refresh the crumbling monuments and tarnished decorations of rude unregarded royalty, and to fasten the nails that cramp the crown upon its head. Meanwhile, in the laurels of my Torquato there will always be one leaf above man's reach, above time's wrath and injury, inscribed with the name of Leonora.

Tasso. O Jerusalem! I have not then sung in vain the Holy Sepulchre.

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Cornelia. After such devotion of your genius, you have undergone too many misfortunes.

Tasso. Congratulate the man who has had many, and may have more. I have had, I have, I can have, one only.

Cornelia. Life runs not smoothly at all seasons, even with the happiest; but after a long course, the rocks subside, the views widen, and it flows on more equably at the end.

Tasso. Have the stars smooth surfaces? No, no; but how they shine!

Cornelia. Capable of thoughts so exalted, so far above the earth we dwell on, why suffer any to depress and anguish you?

Tasso. Cornelia, Cornelia! the mind has within it temples and porticoes and palaces and towers: the mind has under it, ready for the course, steeds brighter than the sun and stronger than the storm; and beside them stand winged chariots, more in number than the Psalmist hath attributed to the Almighty. The mind, I tell thee again, hath its hundred gates, compared whereto the Theban are but willow wickets; and all those hundred gates can genius throw open. But there are some that groan heavily on their hinges, and the hand of God alone can close them.

Cornelia. Torquato has thrown open those of his holy temple; Torquato hath stood, another angel, at his tomb; and am I the sister of Torquato? Kiss me, my brother, and let my tears run only from my pride and joy! Princes have bestowed knighthood on the worthy and unworthy; thou hast called forth those princes from their ranks, pushing back the arrogant and presumptuous of them like intrusive varlets, and conferring on the bettermost crowns and robes, imperishable and unfading.

Tasso. I seem to live back into those days. I feel the helmet on my head; I wave the standard over it: brave men smile upon me; beautiful maidens pull them gently back by the scarf, and will not let them break my slumber, nor undraw the curtain. Corneliolina! . . .

Cornelia. Well, my dear brother! why do you stop so suddenly in the midst of them? They are the pleasantest and best company, and they make you look quite happy and joyous.

Tasso. Corneliolina, dost thou remember Bergamo? What city was ever so celebrated for honest and valiant men, in all classes, or for beautiful girls! There is but one class of those: Beauty is above

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all ranks; the true Madonna, the patroness and bestower of felicity, the queen of heaven.

Cornelia. Hush, Torquato, hush! talk not so.

Tasso. What rivers, how sunshiny and revelling, are the Brembo and the Serio! What a country the Valtellina! I went back to our father's house, thinking to find thee again, my little sister; thinking to kick away thy ball of yellow silk as thou wast stooping for it, to make thee run after me and beat me. I woke early in the morning; thou wert grown up and gone. Away to Sorrento: I knew the road: a few strides brought me back: here I am. To-morrow, my Cornelia, we will walk together, as we used to do, into the cool and quiet caves on the shore; and we will catch the little breezes as they come in and go out again on the backs of the jocund waves.

Cornelia. We will indeed to-morrow; but before we set out we must take a few hours' rest, that we may enjoy our ramble the better.

Tasso. Our Sorrentines, I see, are grown rich and avaricious. They have uprooted the old pomegranate hedges, and have built high walls to prohibit the wayfarer from their vineyards.

Cornelia. I have a basket of grapes for you in the book-room that overlooks our garden.

Tasso. Does the old twisted sage-tree grow still against the window?

Cornelia. It harboured too many insects at last, and there was always a nest of scorpions in the crevice.

Tasso. O! what a prince of a sage-tree! And the well too, with its bucket of shining metal, large enough for the largest cocomero* to cool in it for dinner.

Cornelia. The well, I assure you, is as cool as ever.

Tasso. Delicious! delicious! And the stonework round it, bearing no other marks of waste than my pruning-hook and dagger left behind?

Cornelia. None whatever.

Tasso. White in that place no longer? There has been time enough for it to become all of one colour; grey, mossy, half-decayed.

Cornelia. No, no; not even the rope has wanted repair.

Tasso. Who sings yonder?

* Water-melon.

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Cornelia. Enchanter! No sooner did you say the word *cocomero*, than here comes a boy carrying one upon his head.

Tasso. Listen! listen! I have read in some book or other those verses long ago. They are not unlike my *Aminta*. The very words!

Cornelia. Purifier of love, and humaniser of ferocity! how many, my Torquato, will your gentle thoughts make happy!

Tasso. At this moment I almost think I am one among them.*

Cornelia. Be quite persuaded of it. Come, brother, come with me. You shall bathe your heated brow and weary limbs in the chamber of your childhood. It is there we are always the most certain of repose. The boy shall sing to you those sweet verses; and we will reward him with a slice of his own fruit.

Tasso. He deserves it; cut it thick.

Cornelia. Come then, my truant! Come along, my sweet smiling Torquato!

Tasso. The passage is darker than ever. Is this the way to the little court? Surely those are not the steps that lead down toward the bath? O yes! we are right; I smell the lemon-blossoms. Beware of the old wilding that bears them; it may catch your veil;

* The miseries of Tasso arose not only from the imagination and the heart. In the metropolis of the Christian world, with many admirers and many patrons, bishops, cardinals, princes, he was left destitute, and almost famished. These are his own words: "*Appena* in questo stato ho comprato *due meloni:* e benche io sia stato *quasi sempre infermo*, molte volte mi sono contentato del: manzo e la ministra di latte o di zucca, *quando ho potuto averne*, mi e stata in vece di delizie." In another part he says that he was unable to pay the carriage of a parcel. No wonder; if he had not wherewithal to buy enough of zucca for a meal. Even had he been in health and appetite, he might have satisfied his hunger with it for about five farthings, and have left half for supper. And now a word on his insanity. Having been so imprudent not only as to make it too evident in his poetry that he was the lover of Leonora, but also to signify (not very obscurely) that his love was returned, he much perplexed the Duke of Ferrara, who, with great discretion, suggested to him the necessity of feigning madness. The lady's honour required it from a brother; and a true lover, to convince the world, would embrace the project with alacrity. But there was no reason why the seclusion should be in a dungeon, or why exercise and air should be interdicted. This cruelty, and perhaps his uncertainty of Leonora's compassion, may well be imagined to have produced at last the malady he had feigned. But did Leonora love Tasso as a man would be loved? If we wish to do her honour, let us hope it: for what greater glory can there be, than to have estimated at the full value so exalted a genius, so affectionate and so generous a heart!

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it may scratch your fingers! Pray, take care: it has many thorns about it. And now, Leonora! you shall hear my last verses! Lean you ear a little toward me; for I must repeat them softly under this low archway, else others may hear them too. Ah! you press my hand once more. Drop it, drop it! or the verses will sink into my breast again, and lie there silent! Good girl!

Many, well I know, there are
Ready in your joys to share,
And (I never blame it) you
Are almost as ready too.
But when comes the darker day,
And those friends have dropt away,
Which is there among them all
You should, if you could, recall?
One who wisely loves and well
Hears and shares the griefs you tell;
Him you ever call apart
When the springs o'erflow the heart;
For you know that he alone
Wishes they were *but* his own.
Give, while these he may divide,
Smiles to all the world beside.

Cornelia. We are now in the full light of the chamber: can not you remember it, having looked so intently all around?

Tasso. O sister! I could have slept another hour. You thought I wanted rest: why did you waken me so early? I could have slept another hour or longer. What a dream! But I am calm and happy.

Cornelia. May you never more be otherwise! Indeed, he can not be whose last verses are such as those.

Tasso. Have you written any since that morning?

Cornelia. What morning?

Tasso. When you caught the swallow in my curtains, and trod upon my knees in catching it, luckily with naked feet. The little girl of thirteen laughed at the outcry of her brother Torquatino, and sang without a blush her earliest lay.

Cornelia. I do not recollect it.

Tasso. I do.

Rondinello! rondinello!
Tu sei nero, ma sei bello.
Cosa fà se tu sei nero?
Rondinello! sei il primiero

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De' volanti, palpitanti,
(E vi sono quanti quanti!)
Mai tenuto a questo petto,
E perciò sei il mio diletto.*

Cornelia. Here is the cocomero; it can not be more insipid. Try it.

Tasso. Where is the boy who brought it? where is the boy who sang my Aminta? Serve him first; give him largely. Cut deeper; the knife is too short: deeper; mia brava Corneliolina! quite through all the red, and into the middle of the seeds. Well done!

* The author wrote the verses first in English, but he found it easy to write them better in Italian; they stood in the text as below: they only do for a girl of thirteen:

Swallow! swallow! though so jetty
Are your pinions, you are pretty;
And what matter were it though
You were blacker than a crow?
Of the many birds that fly
(And how many pass me by!)
You're the first I ever prest,
Of the many, to my breast:
Therefore it is very right
You should be my own delight.

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XIX. VITTORIA COLONNA AND MICHEL-ANGELO BUONARROTI.

Vittoria. What has detained you so long, Michel-Angelo? Were we not to have read together, early in the forenoon, the little book of poetry which is lying there on the table?

Michel-Angelo. Excuse me, Madonna. The fault, if mine at all, is mine only in part.

Vittoria. I will pardon it the rather, because, whatever it was, it has removed the traces of care and of study from your brow, and supplanted them with an unwonted smile. Pray now what provokes this hilarity?

Michel-Angelo. Not the delay, I assure you, which never has any such effect when I am coming to the Palazzo Pescara, but merely the mention of poetry.

Vittoria. Why so? I perceive there is mischief in your countenance; let me also have a hand in it, if I find it is such as I like.

Michel-Angelo. When I was walking hither, a middle-aged gentleman, tall, round-shouldered, somewhat grizzly, of a complexion rather cindery than pale, with a look half leering and half imploring, and in a voice half querulous and half passionate, accosted me. He offered many apologies for never having heard of me until this morning, although my fame (he protested) had filled the universe. Whatever he said at one instant he unsaid the next, in like manner.

"But you shall forgive me; you shall soon forgive me," cried he, thrusting into my hand a large volume, from its more opportune station under the coat-flap. I felt it damp, having lain perhaps in the middle of a thousand, two entire winters; and I apprehended cold and rheu-

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matism as much almost at the cover as at the contents. While I held it, uncertain how to reply, he suddenly snatched it back, and cut open the leaves with a very sharp penknife, injuring few of them by the operation, for he was cautious and tender in the extreme.

"I would not delay you in the reading," said he, returning it, "for your praise will richly crown my labours."

Vittoria. What was it? and where is it?

Michel-Angelo. Madonna, let me be an example of patience to you. Wait a little, and you shall hear the whole.

Vittoria. No, no, no!

Michel-Angelo. I do not mean the whole of the poem, I mean only the whole of the occurrence. I saw on the title-page that it was a poem in twenty-four cantos, each containing a hundred stanzas, entitled *The Strangulation of Cethegus.* Between the moments of my surprise and my dismay, . .

"You will find," exclaimed the author, "how wrongfully I have been accused by the malevolent and invidious (and there are few others in the world) of copying our most celebrated writers, and of being destitute of originality myself. If occasionally I resemble them in some sort, it is only to show them how they might have written, with a little more care, judgment, and . . we will not say . . genius!"

Vittoria. On such emergencies, a spice of ridicule is our speediest and most palatable remedy for disgust.

Michel-Angelo. When I inquired of him to what gentleman I was indebted for so valuable a present, he stood in amaze at first; then he repeated his family name, then his baptismal, then a poetical intermediate one of his own invention. These, he told me, I must frequently have heard. I now recognised the peculiar object of ebullient jocularity among my juvenile scholars, one of whom said, "He has cracked a biscuit which was baked for a long voyage, and, pouring a profusion of tepid water on it, he has quadrupled its bulk and heaviness!"

Vittoria. Poor man! his vanity must often be wounded.

Michel-Angelo. He has none.

Vittoria. None?

Michel-Angelo. He told me so himself.

"I have been called vain," said he; "but only by those who never knew me. Proud! yes, proud I am! Vanity, in my opinion,

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(and I am certain that you and all sensible men must think with me,) belongs only to weak minds; pride to the strongest and most sublime. Poets, we hear, are often vain; ay, but *what* poets?"

His eyes, which before were only on a level with the cheek-bones and the frontal, now expanded beyond, and assumed the full majesty of the orbicular.

Vittoria. Well, in what manner has he treated his subject?

Michel-Angelo. He could not resist the pleasure of telling me:

"I believe, Signor Buonarroti, you are, among other things, a painter. Proportions! ay, proportions! The pyramidal, ay! We look to that, don't we? See here then. Cæsar is a stripling, just old enough to fall in love. In Pagan Rome they fell early. The man of genius will seize on the most trifling objects in nature, and raise up a new creation from them. Did you never see an apple or a strawberry which had another more diminutive growing to it? Well, now from this double strawberry or apple I have made out a double Cæsar, such as never was seen before; one the stern resolute senator; the other the gentle sentimental young lover."

On which I submissively asked, whether the stripling who had been received so favourably by the lady, would on the same afternoon be sure of the same facility at his entrance into the senate; and whether it was not requisite to have attained his fortieth year? He smiled at me, and said,

"Surely no, when a poet of the first order gives him a ticket of admission. Does not Horace say we poets have the privilege of daring anything?"

I was afraid to answer, "Yes: but, unhappily, we readers have not the power of *bearing* anything." He continued,

"Cicero is an old gentleman."

Here I ventured to interrupt him, asking if there were in reality more than five or six years between their ages, and by remarking, that although in obscure men and matters, introduced into works of invention, facts might be represented not quite accordant with exact chronology, yet that the two most remarkable characters in the Roman Commonwealth, known by every schoolboy to have entered into public life at the same time, could safely be pushed so far asunder.

"No matter, sir!" replied he sharply; "there they are, the poet's own creation. Observe, if you please, I have placed Cethegus

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between them; a well-grown personage, in his meridian. Behold my pyramid!"

I was silent.

"No originality, I suppose?"

"Very great indeed!" answered I.

"Here is one man," cried he, seizing my hand, "one man in the world, willing to the uttermost of his power to do me justice. Strangers give me praise; friends give me only advice; and such advice, Signor Buonarroti, as would impoverish the realms of literature, if taken."

I stared at him even more wildly than before.

"Perhaps you do not recognise me?" said he. "Many have taken me for Ariosto; but I hope I am loftier and graver, and more innocent. Wherever he has gone I have followed him, in order to abolish the impression of wantonness, and to purify (I repeat the words of our mutual admirers) the too warm air of his enchantments."

"I hope you have not forgotten," said I, "that in lustral water salt is always an ingredient."

He thrust his hands into his pockets, misunderstanding me; at which action I could not but smile. He perceived it; and, after a pause, "Ha! ha! ha!" replied he, in measured laughter, "you are a wit too, Messer Michel-Angelo! Who would have thought it of so considerable a man? Well now, I never venture on it, even among friends. We may be easy and familiar in writing or conversing, without letting ourselves down; we may countenance wit; we may even suggest it; I am not rigorous on that head, as some other great writers are. You see I have helped you to a trifle of it; a mere trifle. Now you must confess you caught the spark from me," added he, coaxingly. "I will never claim it in public; I will not indeed! I scarcely consider it in the light of a plagiarism. I have forborne greater things very long, and have only been compelled at last to declare, in a preface, that I wrote the better part of *Orlando Furioso* many years before it was conceived by Messer Ludovico. I heard his injurious claims, and told nobody the fact."

"How does your poem end, sir?" said I, with all the rapidity of impatience.

He mistook my motive, and cried, "Really I am flattered and charmed at the interest you take in it. You have devoured it in

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your mind already, and would have the very shell. In compliance with your earnestness I will answer the question, although it might be hurtful, I fear, to the effect the whole composition, grasped at once, would produce on you."

I declared the contrary, with many protestations. He raised up his head from its slanting position of distrust and doubt. Again I assured him of my resolution to despatch it at a sitting.

Vittoria. I never thought you capable of such duplicity.

Michel-Angelo. Of what may I not be capable, if you absolve me with so gracious a smile?

"I will then tell you how it ends," continued he, "if you never have read the history. Cethegus was, I am sorry to say, a person of bad character, although of birth. With perfect fidelity I have translated the speeches of Sallust; but Sallust had no notion (and history could do nothing for him) of placing the culprit bound between two Turkish mutes, with a friar in the rear, while the great bell tolled from Santa Maria Maggiore."

I started.

"That is the place, the real place; he was strangled just below."

"*Bell!*" I soliloquized, rather too audibly.

"If you never have felt the effect of a bell at executions, and particularly on the stage; if you never have felt the effect of a bell, Signor Buonarroti, through your brain and heart," said he, breathing hard, and allowing his watery diagonal eyes only half their width, "then do I most sincerely pity you, Signor Buonarroti, and wish you a very good morning."

I bowed, and fancied my deliverance was accomplished. But he instantly turned round again, and added,

"If you object to a bell, you may object to a clock. Now, it was precisely as the clock struck midnight that justice was done by me upon the execrable Cethegus, as a warning to all future generations."

"Nobody can be more firmly convinced," said I, "how execrable is this violation of all laws, moral, social, political, and," I was about to add inwardly, poetical, when he seized my hand, and said, with firm deliberation,

"There are two men in degenerate Rome who abhor the vicious in conduct and embrace the pure in poetry. When you have bestowed as much time as I have on the contemplation and composi-

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tion of it, your surprise (but not your admiration, I humbly trust) will be considerably diminished, on the repeated perusal of my few edited volumes. I am as sure of eternal fame as if I had it in my pocket. Fame, Signor Michel-Angelo, has a snail's growth; true, real, genuine fame has, and you may know it by that. But, I promise you, in another century or two you shall see mine a very giant. I have sometimes thought I have a host of enemies: I now begin to think I can have only one: I have him in my eye. He is capable of putting on all manner of faces. I myself have seen him looking like an elderly man; some of my friends have seen him looking quite young; and others have seen him what they thought was middle-aged. He manages his voice equally well. If you go into twenty streets, only mention me, and you will find him at the same moment in all of them. Happily, he always hits in the wrong place. He says I am restless for celebrity! he says I want vigour and originality!"

He ended with three little titters; and these at least were in good metre, and showed care in the composition.

Vittoria. Happy man! for vanity is rarely attended by vexation of spirit, and nobody is oppressed by a sense of emptiness. I must now undertake his defence.

Michel-Angelo. Properly then have you exclaimed *happy man!*

Vittoria. The clock and bell indeed are stumbling-blocks; but there are some instances in which even so inopportune an introduction of them is less censurable than in others. Suppose for example a dramatic poet in an age when the greater part of his audience was rude and ignorant. After he had supplied the more learned and intellectual with the requisites of his art, I would not quarrel with him for indulging the market-folk with a hearty peal of bells, or perhaps a discharge of artillery, while they are following the triumphal car of Cæsar, or shouting round the conflagration of Persepolis! But if another, in offering his tragedy for the perusal of our times, should neglect to sweep away the remnants of an old largess given to the multitude, it can only be from the conviction that they are his proper company; that he is about to be tried by his own order; that his services are mostly due to the majority; and that the world's population in simpletons is by no means on the wane. Consider now, my dear Michel-Angelo, if consistencies, absurdities, anachronisms, are to be found only in one department of the arts. I appeal to you,

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the president, prince, dictator of them all, whether it is as ridiculous to represent an angel playing on a violin, for which your master Ghirlandaio and some other more ancient painters have been reprehended, as it is to represent, what we find on many recent monuments, a poet or a musician with a lyre in his hand. For, if angels play on any instrument at all, they may as well play on such as men invented late as early; since, at whatever time men invented them, angels may have invented them before.

Michel-Angelo. A lyre in the hand of poet or musician born in our times, is a contradiction to ages, a defiance to chronology, and might mislead in regard to usages a remote posterity. So indeed might our silly inscriptions about the *manes* and *ashes* of our uncles and aunts, who would have been horrified at the idea of being burnt like Pagans, bottled up in urns, and standing bolt-upright, where milk and honey are lapped and sucked before their faces, by an ugly brood of devils unamenable to priest or purgatory. But while emperors and kings are hoisted upon columns a hundred palms above the earth, where only a pigeon would feel secure, and while saints and martyrs, instead of receiving us at the door or on the steps, are perched on the slope of a ballustrade, we need not look on the ground for a fresh crop of absurdities. The ancient Romans, quite barbarous enough in violating the pure architecture of Greece, abstained from such as these, and went no farther (nor truly was there any occasion) than to narrow the street, instead of enlarging it, for the march of armies through triumphal arches. The idea, so abused, was taken from the boughs and branches hung on poles, which shaded their forefathers at their return from plunder, while wine was poured out to them in the dusty path by wives and daughters. The songs alone continued just the same as they were at first, coarse, ribald, in the trochaic measure, which appears to be the commonest and earliest in most nations.

Vittoria. The difference between poetry and all other arts, all other kinds of composition, is this: in them utility comes before delight; in this, delight comes before utility.

Michel-Angelo. In some pleasing poems there is nothing whatsoever of the useful.

Vittoria. My friend, I think you are mistaken. An obvious moral is indeed a heavy protuberance, which injures the gracefulness of a poem; but there is wisdom of one kind or other in every sentence of a

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really good composition, and it produces its effect in various ways. You employ gold in your pictures; not always of the same consistency or the same preparation, but several of your colours, even the most different, are in part composed of it. This is a matter of which those in general who are gratified with the piece are unsuspicious. The beautiful in itself is useful by awakening our finer sensibilities, which it must be our own fault if we do not often carry with us into action. A well-ordered mind touches no branch of intellectual pleasure so brittle and incompliant as never to be turned to profit.

Michel-Angelo. The gift that was just now forced into my hand, I sadly suspect would have produced but little.

Vittoria. Have you brought your treasure with you? Where is it?

Michel-Angelo. Knowing your antipathy to bad smells and bad poems, knowing also that Father Tiber is accustomed to both of them, I devoutly made my offering to him as I crossed the bridge.

Vittoria. Indeed I am not over-curious about a specimen; and few things that are hopeless ever gave any one less concern.

Michel-Angelo. Such resignation merits all possible reward; and all that lies in me you shall receive. As the last page fluttered on the battlement, I caught two verses, without the intermediate:

"Signor Cetego! la preghiera é vana.
Spicciti! senti! suona la campana."

and these two in sequence, which are the conclusion:

"Cetego casca in terra come un bove,
E l'anima gli scappa . . chi sà dove!"

Vittoria. If I could suppress my smile, perhaps I should reprove you; but at last I will be grave. Men like yourself, men of reputation and authority, should not only be lenient and indulgent, but even grateful, to the vain and imbecile who attempt to please us. If we are amused at an ebullition of frowardness in children, at their little contortions, stamps, and menaces, are not the same things at least inoffensive to us, when children of the same character are grey, wrinkled, and toothless? From those of three feet we only see ourselves in a convex mirror; we see what we were at the same age; but from others of six feet we gather stores for pleasantry, for imagina-

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tion, and for thought. Against their blank wall is inserted the standard by which we may measure our friends and ourselves. As we look up at it, Comedy often lays her playful hand on our shoulder; and, as we turn our faces back, we observe Philosophy close behind her. If men in general were much nearer to perfection than they are, the noblest of human works would be farther from it. From the fall of Adam to the slaughter of Hector, how vastly has genius been elevated by our imperfections! What history, what romance, what poem, interests us by unmixed good or by unwavering consistency? We require in you strong motives, pertinacious resolves, inflexible wills, and ardent passions; you require in us all our weaknesses. From your shore start forth abrupt and lofty precipices; on ours, diametrically opposite, lie sequestered bays and deep recesses. We deride the man who is, or would be, like us in anything, the vain one in particular. Vanity in women is not invariably, though it is too often, the sign of a cold and selfish heart; in men it always is: therefore we ridicule it in society, and in private hate it.

Michel-Angelo. You prove to me, Donna Vittoria, that from base materials may rise clear and true reflections!

Vittoria. I wonder that poets who have encountered what they call the injustice of the world, hold with such pertinacity to the objects of attack.

Michel-Angelo. We are unwilling to drown our blind puppies, because they are blind; we are then unwilling to throw them into the pond, because they are just beginning to open their eyes; lastly, we refuse idle boys, who stand ready for the sport, the most misshapen one of the litter, he having been trodden on in the stable, and kicked about by the grooms for his lameness.

Vittoria. Pretty tropes indeed! and before one who dabbles in poetry.

Michel-Angelo. So the silver-footed Thetis dabbled in the sea, when she could descend at pleasure to its innermost depths.

Vittoria. You must certainly think in good earnest that I lay high claims to poetry. Here is more than enough flattery for the vainest woman, who is not a poetess also. Speak, if you please, about others, particularising or generalising.

Michel-Angelo. Then to generalise a little. In our days poetry is a vehicle which does not carry much within it, but is top-heavy with what is corded on. Children, in a hurry to raise plants, cover their

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allotment of border with all the seeds the pinafore will hold: so do small authors their poetry-plots. Hence what springs up in either quarter has nothing of stamen, but only sickly succulence for grubs to feed on.

Vittoria. Never say *in our days*, unless you include many other days in most ages. In those when poetry was very flourishing there were complaints against it, as we find by Horace and Aristophanes. I am afraid, Michel-Angelo, some idle boy has been putting a pebble into his sling and aiming at your architraves; in other words, some poetaster or criticaster has been irreverent toward you. I do not mean about your poetry, which perhaps you undervalue, but about the greater things in which you are engaged.

Michel-Angelo. Nothing more likely; but as only the worst can be guilty of it, I shall let them fall into other offences, that heavier punishment than I ever take the trouble to inflict, may befall them. It is only the few that have found the way into my heart, who can wound it!

Vittoria. You are safe then.

Michel-Angelo. Whoever is engaged in great and difficult works, as I am, must inevitably meet with rivals and enemies!

Vittoria. Enemies! yes! Say that word only. What a pyramid of skulls from the insanely hostile does every predominant genius erect! Leave those of your light assailants to whiten in their native deserts; and march on. Indeed it is unnecessary to exhort you to magnanimity, for you appear unusually at ease and serene.

Michel-Angelo. Serenity is no sign of security. A stream is never so smooth, equable, and silvery, as at the instant before it becomes a cataract. The children of Niobe fell by the arrows of Diana under a bright and cloudless sky.

Vittoria. Alas! the intellectual, the beautiful, and the happy, are always the nearest to danger.

Michel-Angelo. I come to you at all times, my indulgent friend, to calm my anxieties whensoever they oppress me. You never fail; you never falter. Sometimes a compassionate look, sometimes a cheerful one, alights on the earthly thought, and dries up all its noxiousness. Music, and a voice that is more and better, are its last resorts. The gentleness of your nature has led you to them when we both had paused. There are songs that attract and melt the heart more sweetly than the Siren's. Ah! there is love too, even

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here below, more precious than immortality; but it is not the love of a Circe or a Calypso.

Vittoria. Nor were they happy themselves; and yet perhaps they were not altogether undeserving of it, they who could select for the object of their affections the courageous, the enduring, and the intelligent. There are few men at any time whom moral dignity and elevation of genius have made conspicuous above the mass of society; and fewer still are the women who can distinguish them from persons of ordinary capacity, endowed with qualities merely agreeable. But if it happens that a man of highest worth has been read attentively and thoroughly by those eyes which he has taught the art of divination, let another object intervene and occupy their attention, let the beloved be induced to think it a merit and a duty to forget him, yet memory is not an outcast nor an alien when the company of the day is gone, but says many things and asks many questions which she would not turn away from if she could.

Michel-Angelo. The morning comes, the fresh world opens, and the vestiges of one are trodden out by many: they were only on the dew, and with the dew they are departed.

Vittoria. Although you are not alluding to yourself at the present time, nor liable to be interrupted in the secreter paths of life, yet I think you too susceptible in those you are pursuing, and I was anxious to discover if anything unpleasant had occurred. For, little minds in high places are the worst impediments to great. Chestnuts and esculent oaks permit the traveller to pass onward under them; briars and thorns and unthrifty grass entangle him.

Michel-Angelo. You teach me also to talk figuratively; yet not remotely from one of the arts I profess. We may make a large hole in a brick wall and easily fill it up; but the slightest flaw in a ruby or a crysolite is irreparable. Thus it is in minds. The ordinary soon take offence and (as they call it) make it up again; the sensitive and delicate are long-suffering, but their wounds heal imperfectly, if at all.

Vittoria. Are you quite certain you are without any?

Michel-Angelo. You and Saint Peter insure me. The immortal are invulnerable!

Vittoria. Evader! but glad am I that you have spoken the word, although you set at nought thereby the authority of Homer. For you remind me that he, like Dante, often has a latent meaning by

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the side of an evident one, which indeed is peculiar to great poets. Unwise commanders call out all their forces to the field; the more prudent have their reserves posted where it is not everybody that can discover them.

In the Iliad two immortals are wounded; Venus slightly, Mars severely. The deities of Love and War are the only ones exposed to violence. In the former, weakness is shown to be open to aggression; in the latter, violence to resistance and repulse; and both are subject to more pain than they can well endure. At the same time, Juno and Pallas, Mercury and Apollo and Neptune, do not stand aloof, but stand unassailable. Here we perceive that sometimes the greater gods are subtilised and attenuated into allegories. Homer bestows on them more or less potency at his pleasure. One moment we see a bright and beautiful god stand manifest before us; presently his form and radiance are indistinct; at last, in the place where he was standing, there are only some scattered leaves, inscribed with irregular and uncouth characters; these invite our curiosity with strange similitudes; we look more attentively, and they seem brought closer together: the god has receded to deliver the oracle of his wisdom.

Michel-Angelo. Homer left a highway, overshadowed with lofty trees and perennial leafage, between the regions of Allegory and Olympus. The gloom of Dante is deeper, and the boundaries even more indiscernible. We know the one is censured for it; perhaps the other was.

Vittoria. To the glory of our Italy be it spoken, we are less detractive than our forefathers the Romans. Dante and Petrarca were estimated highly by those nearest them. Indeed, to confess the truth, Petrarca has received for his poetry what ought rather to have been awarded him for rarer and sublimer deserts. Dante has fared less sumptuously, and there are fewer who could entertain him. Petty Latin things called *classics*, as their betters are, smooth, round, light, hollow, regularly figured like pasteboard zodiacs, were long compared and even preferred to the triple world of Dante. I speak not of Grecian literature, because I know it not sufficiently; but I imagine Rome is to Greece what a bull-ring is to a palæstra, the games of the circus to the Olympic, fighting bondmen to the brothers of Helen, the starry twins of Jupiter and Leda.

Michel-Angelo. Boccaccio first scattered the illusion by which the

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guide seemed loftier and grander than the guided. The spirit of the immortal master, our Tuscan, no longer led by the hand, nor submissively following, soared beyond Italy, and is seen at last, in his just proportions, right against the highest pinnacle of Greece. Ariosto has not yet been countenanced by the Italian potentates, nor fostered in the genial fur of our Holy Fathers, with the same tenderness as some minute poets, who dirty their cold fingers with making little clay models after old colossal marbles. But Ariosto is too marked in his features to be fondled, and too broad in his shoulders for the chairs they occupy. He is to Ovid what Sicily is to Italy; divided by a narrow channel; the same warm climate, the same flowery glebe; less variety, less extent. Not only these, but perhaps all poets excepting Pindar and Æschylus, want compression and curtailment; yet the parings of some would be worth the pulp of others.

Vittoria. Those to whom, I will not say genius, but splendid talents have been given, are subject to weaknesses to which inferior men are less liable; as the children of the rich are to diseases from which those of the poorer generally are exempt.

Michel-Angelo. The reason, I conceive, is this. Modern times have produced no critic contemporary with an eminent poet. There is a pettishness and frowardness about some literary men, in which, at the mention of certain names, they indulge without moderation or shame. They are prompt and alert at showing their sore places, and strip for it up to the elbow. They feel only a comfortable warmth when they are reproved for their prejudices and antipathies, which often are no more to be traced to their origin than the diseases of the body, and come without contact, without even breathing the same air. No remedy being sought for them, they rapidly sink into the mental constitution, weakening its internal strength and disfiguring its external character. In some persons at first they are covered and concealed; but afterward, when they are seen and remarked, are exhibited in all their virulence with swaggering effrontery.

Vittoria. Geese and buffaloes are enraged at certain colours; there are certain colours also of the mind lively enough to excite choler at a distance in the silly and ferine. I have witnessed in authors the most vehement expression of hatred against those whose writings they never read, and whose persons they never approached: all these are professors of Christianity, and some of moral philosophy.

Michel-Angelo. Do not wonder then if I take my walk at a distance

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from the sibilant throat and short-flighted wing; at a distance from the miry hide and blindly directed horn. Such people as you describe to me may be men of talents; but talents lie below genius.

Occasionally we attribute to a want of benevolence what in reality is only a want of discernment. The bad sticks as closely as the good, and often more readily. If we would cover with gold a cornice or a statue, we require a preparation for it; smoke does its business in a moment.

Vittoria. Sometimes we ourselves may have exercised our ingenuity, but without any consciousness of spleen or ill-humour, in detecting and discussing the peculiar faults of great poets. This has never been done, or done very clumsily, by our critics, who fancy that a measureless and shapeless phantom of enthusiasm leaves an impression of a powerful mind, and a quick apprehension of the beautiful.

"Who," they ask us, "who would look for small defects in such an admirable writer? who is not transported by his animation, and blinded by his brightness?"

To this interrogation my answer is,

"Very few indeed; only the deliberate, the instructed, and the wise. Only they who partake in some degree of his nature know exactly where to find his infirmities."

We perhaps on some occasions have spoken of Dante in such a manner as would make the unwary, if they heard us, believe that we estimate him no higher than Statius, Silius, Valerius, and the like. On the other hand, we have admired the versatility, facility, and invention of Ovid, to such a degree as would excite a suspicion that we prefer him even to Virgil. But in one we spoke of the worst parts, in the other of the best. Censure and praise can not leave the lips at the same breath: one is caught before the other comes: our verdict is distributed abroad when we have summed up only one column of the evidence.

Michel-Angelo. Surely I have heard you declare that you could produce faults out of Virgil graver than any in Ovid.

Vittoria. The faults of Ovid are those of a playful and unruly boy; the faults of Virgil are those of his master. I do not find in Ovid (as you may remember I then observed) the hypallage; such for instance as Virgil's, '*The odour brought the wind*,' instead of '*The wind brought the odour*.' No child could refrain from

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laughter at such absurdity, no pedagogue from whipping him for laughing at such authority. This figure (so the grammarians are pleased to call it) far exceeds all other faults in language, for it reverses the thing it should represent. If I buy a mirror, I would rather buy one which has fifty small flaws in it, than one which places my feet where my head should be.

There are poems of Ovid which I have been counselled to cast aside, and my curiosity has never violated the interdict. But even in Homer himself nothing of the same extent is more spirited, or truly epic, than the contest of Ajax and Ulysses. You shall hear in this apartment, some day soon, what our Bembo thinks about it. No Roman, of any age, either has written more purely, or shown himself a more consummate judge both of style and matter.

Michel-Angelo. I think so too; but some have considered him rather as correct and elegant than forcible and original.

Vittoria. Because he *is* correct; of which alone they can form a notion, and of this imperfectly. Had he written in a negligent and disorderly manner, they would have admired his freedom and copiousness, ignorant that, in literature as in life, the rich and noble are as often frugal as the indigent and obscure. The cardinal never talks vaguely and superficially on any species of composition; no, not even with his friends. Where a thing is to be admired or censured, he explains in what it consists. He points to the star in the ascendant, and tells us accurately at what distance other stars are from it. In lighter mood, on lighter matters, he shakes the beetle out of the rose, and shows us what species of insect that is which he has thrown on its back at our feet, and in what part and to what extent the flower has been corroded by it. He is too noble in his nature to be habitually sarcastic, and too conscious of power to be declamatory or diffuse.

Michel-Angelo. Nevertheless, in regard to sarcasm, I have known him to wither a fungus of vanity by a single beam of wit.

Vittoria. He may indeed have chastised an evil-doer, but a glance of the eye or a motion of the hand is enough. Throughout the ample palace of his mind not an instrument of torture can be found.

Michel-Angelo. Perhaps in the offices below, a scourge may be suspended for intrusive curs, or for thieves disguised in stolen liveries. I wish my friend of this morning had met the Cardinal instead of me. Possessing no sense of shame or decency, and fancying that wherever

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he has thrust a book he has conferred a distinction, he would have taken the same easy liberty with his Eminence.

Vittoria. If he continues to be so prolific, we shall soon see another island emerging from the Tiber. Our friend the Cardinal has indeed no time to squander on those who, like your waylayer, infest the public roads of literature, by singing old songs and screaming old complaints. But I wish his political occupations would allow him to pursue his pleasanter studies, and especially in exercising his acute judgment on our primary poets. For our country, both anciently and of late, has always wanted a philosophical critic on poetical works, and none are popular in the present day but such as generalise or joke. Ariosto, in despite of them, is, however tardily and difficultly, coming into favour. There is quite enough in him for our admiration, although we never can compare him with some among the ancients. For the human heart is the world of poetry; the imagination is only its atmosphere. Fairies, and genii, and angels themselves, are at best its insects, glancing with unsubstantial wings about its lower regions and less noble edifices.

Michel-Angelo. You have been accustomed, O Madonna, to contemplate in person those illustrious men who themselves were the destinies of nations, and you are therefore less to be satisfied with the imaginative and illusory.

Vittoria. There are various kinds of greatness, as we all know; however, the most-part of those who profess one species is ready to acknowledge no other. The first and chief is intellectual. But surely those also are to be admitted into the number of the eminently great, who move large masses by action, by throwing their own ardent minds into the midst of popular assemblies or conflicting armies, compelling, directing, and subjecting. This greatness is indeed far from so desirable as that which shines serenely from above, to be our hope, comfort, and guidance; to lead us in spirit from a world of sad realities into one fresh from the poet's hand, and blooming with all the variety of his creation. Hence the most successful generals, and the most powerful kings, will always be considered by the judicious and dispassionate as invested with less dignity, less extensive and enduring authority, than great philosophers and great poets.

Michel-Angelo. By the wise indeed; but little men, like little birds, are attracted and caught by false lights.

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Vittoria. It was beautifully and piously said in days of old, that, wherever a spring rises from the earth, an altar should be erected. Ought not we, my friend, to bear the same veneration to the genius which springs from obscurity in the loneliness of lofty places, and which descends to irrigate the pastures of the mind with a perennial freshness and vivifying force? If great poets build their own temples, as indeed they do, let us at least offer up to them our praises and thanksgivings, and hope to render them acceptable by the purest incense of the heart.

Michel-Angelo. First, we must find the priests, for ours are inconvertible from their crumbling altars. Too surely we are without an Aristoteles to precede and direct them.

Vittoria. We want him not only for poetry, but philosophy. Much of the dusty perfumery, which thickened for a season the pure air of Attica, was dissipated by his breath. Calm reasoning, deep investigation, patient experiment, succeeded to contentious quibbles and trivial irony. The sun of Aristoteles dispersed the unwholesome vapour that arose from the garden of Academus. Instead of spectral demons, instead of the monstrous progeny of mystery and immodesty, there arose tangible images of perfect symmetry. Homer was recalled from banishment: Æschylus followed: the choruses bowed before him, divided, and took their stands. Symphonies were heard; what symphonies! So powerful as to lighten the chain that Jupiter had riveted on his rival. The conquerors of kings until then omnipotent, kings who had trampled on the towers of Babylon and had shaken the eternal sanctuaries of Thebes, the conquerors of these kings bowed their olive-crowned heads to the sceptre of Destiny, and their tears ran profusely over the immeasurable wilderness of human woes.

Michel-Angelo. We have no poetry of this kind now, nor have we auditors who could estimate or know it if we had. Yet, as the fine arts have raised up their own judges, literature may, ere long, do the same. Instead of undervaluing and beating down, let us acknowledge and praise any resemblance we may trace to the lineaments of a past and stronger generation.

Vittoria. But by the manners and habitudes of antiquity ours are little to be improved. Scholars who scorn the levity of Ariosto, and speak disdainfully of the middle ages, in the very centre of the enchantment thrown over them by the magician of Ferrara, never

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think how much we owe, not only to him, but also to those ages: never think by what energies, corporeal and mental, from the barbarous soldier rose the partially polished knight, and high above him, by slower degrees, the accomplished and perfect gentleman, the summit of nobility.

Michel-Angelo. O that Pescara were present! Pescara! whom your words seem to have embodied and recalled! Pescara! the lover of all glory, but mostly of yours, Madonna! he to whom your beauty was eloquence and your eloquence beauty, inseparable as the influences of deity.

Vittoria. Present! and is he not? Where I am there is he, for evermore. Earth may divide, Heaven never does. The beauty you speak of is the only thing departed from me, and that also is with him perhaps. He may, I hope he may, see me as he left me, only more pacified, more resigned. After I had known Pescara, even if I had never been his, I should have been espoused to him; espoused to him before the assembled testimonies of his innumerable virtues, before his genius, his fortitude, his respectful superiority, his manly gentleness. Yes, I should have been married to his glory; and, neither in his lifetime nor when he left the world, would I have endured, O Michel-Angelo, any other alliance. The very thought, the very words conveying it, are impiety. But friendship helps to support that heavy pall to which the devoted cling tenaciously for ever.

Michel-Angelo. Oh! that at this moment . . .

Vittoria. Hush! hush! Wishes are by-paths on the declivity to unhappiness; the weaker terminate in the sterile sand, the stronger in the vale of tears. If there are griefs, which we know there are, so intense as to deprive us of our intellects, griefs in the next degree of intensity, far from depriving us of them, amplify, purify, regulate, and adorn them. We sometimes spring above happiness, and fall on the other side. This hath happened to me: but strength enough is left me to raise myself up again, and to follow the guide who calls me.

Michel-Angelo. Surely God hath shown that mortal what his own love is, for whom he hath harmonised a responsive bosom, warm in the last as in the first embraces. One look of sympathy, one regret at parting, is enough, is too much; it burdens the heart with overpayment. You can not gather up the blossoms which, by blast after blast, have been scattered and whirled behind you. Are they

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requisite? The fruit was formed within them ere they fell upon the walk; you have culled it in its season.

Vittoria. Before we go into another state of existence, a thousand things occur to detach us imperceptibly from this. To some (who knows to how many?) the images of early love return with an inviting yet a saddening glance, and the breast that was laid out for the sepulchre bleeds afresh. Such are ready to follow where they are beckoned, and look keenly into the darkness they are about to penetrate.

Did we not begin to converse on another subject? Why have you not spoken to me this half-hour?

Michel-Angelo. I see, O Donna Vittoria, I may close the volume we were to read and criticise.

Vittoria. Then I hope you have something of your own for me instead.

Michel-Angelo. Are you not tired of my verses? Your smile is too splendid a reward, but too indistinct an answer. Pray, pray tell me, Madonna! and yet I have hardly the courage to hear you tell me . . . have I not sometimes written to you? . . .

Vittoria. My cabinet can answer for that. Lift up your sphinx if you desire to find it. Anything in particular?

Michel-Angelo. I would say, written to you with . . .

Vittoria. With what? a golden pen?

Michel-Angelo. No, no.

Vittoria. An adamantine one?

You child! you child! are you hiding it in my sleeve? An eagle's plume? a nightingale's? a dove's? I must have recourse to the living sphinx, if there is any, not to the porphyry. Have you other pens than these? I know the traces of them all, and am unwilling to give you credit for any fresh variety. But come, tell me, what is it?

Michel-Angelo. I am apprehensive that I sometimes have written to you with an irrepressible gush of tenderness, which is but narrowed and deepened and precipitated by entering the channel of verse. This, falling upon vulgar ears, might be misinterpreted.

Vitoria. If I have deserved a wise man's praise and a virtuous man's affection, I am not to be defrauded of them by stealthy whispers, nor deterred from them by intemperate clamour. She whom Pescara selected for his own, must excite the envy of too

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many; but the object of envy is not the sufferer by it: there are those who convert it even into recreation. One star hath ruled my destiny and shaped my course. Perhaps . . no, not perhaps, but surely, under that clear light I may enjoy unreproved the enthusiasm of his friend, the greatest man, the most ardent and universal genius, he has left behind him. Courage! courage! Lift up again the head which nothing on earth should lower. When death approaches me, be present, Michel-Angelo, and shed as pure tears on this hand as I did shed on the hand of Pescara.

Michel-Angelo. Madonna! they are these; they are these! endure them now rather!

Merciful God! if there is piety in either, grant me to behold her at that hour, not in the palace of a hero, not in the chamber of a saint, but from thine everlasting mansions!

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XX. THE COUNT GLEICHEM: THE COUNTESS: THEIR CHILDREN, AND ZAIDA.*

Countess. Ludolph! my beloved Ludolph! do we meet again! Ah! I am jealous of these little ones, and of the embraces you are giving them.

Why sigh, my sweet husband?

Come back again, Wilhelm! Come back again, Annabella! How could you run away? Do you think you can see better out of the corner?

Annabella. Is this indeed our papa? What, in the name of mercy, can have given him so dark a colour? I hope I shall never be like that; and yet everybody tells me I am very like papa.

Wilhelm. Do not let her plague you, papa; but take me between your knees (I am too old to sit upon them), and tell me all about the Turks, and how you ran away from them.

Countess. Wilhelm! if your father had run away from the enemy, we should not have been deprived of him two whole years.

Wilhelm. I am hardly such a child as to suppose that a Christian knight would run away from a rebel Turk in battle. But even Christians are taken, somehow, by their tricks and contrivances, and their dog Mahomet. Beside, you know you yourself told me, with tear after tear, and scolding me for mine, that papa was taken by them.

Annabella. Neither am I, who am only one year younger, so

* Andreas Hundorff relates that the Pope sanctioned the double marriage of Count Gleichem, who carried his second wife into Thuringia, where she was well received by the first, and, having no children, was devoted to her rival's.

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foolish as to believe there is any dog Mahomet. And, if there were, we have dogs that are better and faithfuller and stronger.

Wilhelm (*to his father*). I can hardly help laughing to think what curious fancies girls have about Mahomet. We know that Mahomet is a dog-spirit with three horsetails.

Annabella. Papa! I am glad to see you smile at Wilhelm. I do assure you he is not half so bad a boy as he was, although he did point at me, and did tell you some mischief.

Count. I ought to be indeed most happy at seeing you all again.

Annabella. And so you are. Don't pretend to look grave now. I very easily find you out. I often look grave when I am the happiest. But forth it bursts at last: there is no room for it in tongue, or eyes, or anywhere.

Count. And so, my little angel, you begin to recollect me.

Annabella. At first I used to dream of papa, but at last I forgot how to dream of him: and then I cried, but at last I left off crying. And then, papa, who could come to me in my sleep, seldom came again.

Count. Why do you now draw back from me, Annabella?

Annabella. Because you really are so very very brown: just like those ugly Turks who sawed the pines in the saw-pit under the wood, and who refused to drink wine in the heat of summer, when Wilhelm and I brought it to them. Do not be angry; we did it only once.

Wilhelm. Because one of them stamped and frightened her when the other seemed to bless us.

Count. Are they still living?

Countess. One of them is.

Wilhelm. The fierce one.

Count. We will set him free, and wish it were the other.

Annabella. Papa! I am glad you are come back without your spurs.

Countess. Hush, child, hush.

Annabella. Why, mama? Do not you remember how they tore my frock when I clung to him at parting? Now I begin to think of him again: I lose everything between that day and this.

Countess. The girl's idle prattle about the spurs has pained you: always too sensitive; always soon hurt, though never soon offended.

Count. O God! O my children! O my wife! it is not the loss of spurs I now must blush for.

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Annabella. Indeed, papa, you never can blush at all, until you cut that horrid beard off.

Countess. Well may you say, my own Ludolph, as you do; for most gallant was your bearing in the battle.

Count. Ah! why was it ever fought?

Countess. Why were most battles? But they may lead tó glory even through slavery.

Count. And to shame and sorrow.

Countess. Have I lost the little beauty I possessed, that you hold my hand so languidly, and turn away your eyes when they meet mine? It was not so formerly . . unless when first we loved.

That one kiss restores to me all my lost happiness.

Come; the table is ready: there are your old wines upon it: you must want that refreshment.

Count. Go, my sweet children! you must eat your supper before I do.

Countess. Run into your own room for it.

Annabella. I will not go until papa has patted me again on the shoulder, now I begin to remember it. I do not much mind the beard: I grow used to it already: but indeed I liked better to stroke and pat the smooth laughing cheek, with my arm across the neck behind. It is very pleasant even so. Am I not grown? I can put the whole length of my finger between your lips.

Count. And now, will not *you* come, Wilhelm?

Wilhelm. I am too tall and too heavy: she is but a child. (*Whispers.*) Yet I think, papa, I am hardly so much of a man but you may kiss me over again . . if you will not let her see it.

Countess. My dears! why do not you go to your supper?

Annabella. Because he has come to show us what Turks are like.

Wilhelm. Do not be angry with her. Do not look down, papa!

Count. Blessings on you both, sweet children!

Wilhelm. We may go now.

Countess. And now, Ludolph, come to the table, and tell me all your sufferings.

Count. The worst begin here.

Countess. Ungrateful Ludolph!

Count. I am he: that is my name in full.

Countess. You have then ceased to love me?

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Count. Worse; if worse can be: I have ceased to deserve your love.

Countess. No: Ludolph hath spoken falsely for once; but Ludolph is not false.

Count. I have forfeited all I ever could boast of, your affection and my own esteem. Away with caresses! Repulse me, abjure me; hate, and never pardon me. Let the abject heart lie untorn by one remorse. Forgiveness would split and shiver what slavery but abased.

Countess. Again you embrace me; and yet tell me never to pardon you! O inconsiderate man! O idle deviser of impossible things!

But you have not introduced to me those who purchased your freedom, or who achieved it by their valour.

Count. Mercy! O God!

Countess. Are they dead? Was the plague abroad?

Count. I will not dissemble . . such was never my intention . . that my deliverance was brought about by means of . .

Countess. Say it at once . . a lady.

Count. It was.

Countess. She fled with you.

Count. She did.

Countess. And have you left her, sir?

Count. Alas! alas! I have not; and never can.

Countess. Now come to my arms, brave, honourable Ludolph! Did I not say thou couldst not be ungrateful? Where, where is she who has given me back my husband?

Count. Dare I utter it! in this house.

Countess. Call the children.

Count. No; they must not affront her: they must not even stare at her: other eyes, not theirs, must stab me to the heart.

Countess. They shall bless her; we will all. Bring her in.

[*Zaida is led in by the Count.*

Countess. We three have stood silent long enough: and much there may be on which we will for ever keep silence. But, sweet young creature! can I refuse my protection, or my love, to the preserver of my husband? Can I think it a crime, or even a folly, to have pitied the brave and the unfortunate? to have pressed (but alas! that it ever should have been so here!) a generous heart to a tender one?

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Why do you begin to weep?

Zaida. Under your kindness, O lady, lie the sources of these tears.

But why has he left us? He might help me to say many things which I want to say.

Countess. Did he never tell you he was married?

Zaida. He did indeed.

Countess. That he had children?

Zaida. It comforted me a little to hear it.

Countess. Why? prythee why?

Zaida. When I was in grief at the certainty of holding but the second place in his bosom, I thought I could at least go and play with them, and win perhaps their love.

Countess. According to our religion, a man must have only one wife.

Zaida. That troubled me again. But the dispenser of your religion, who binds and unbinds, does for sequins or services what our Prophet does purely through kindness.

Countess. We can love but one.

Zaida. *We* indeed can love only one: but men have large hearts.

Countess. Unhappy girl!

Zaida. The very happiest in the world.

Countess. Ah! inexperienced creature!

Zaida. The happier for that perhaps.

Countess. But the sin!

Zaida. Where sin is, there must be sorrow: and I, my sweet sister, feel none whatever. Even when tears fall from my eyes, they fall only to cool my breast: I would not have one the fewer: they all are for him: whatever he does, whatever he causes, is dear to me.

Countess (*aside*). This is too much. I could hardly endure to have him so beloved by another, even at the extremity of the earth. (*To Zaida.*) You would not lead him into perdition.

Zaida. I have led him (Allah be praised!) to his wife and children. It was for those I left my father. He whom we love might have stayed with me at home: but there he would have been only half happy, even had he been free. I could not often let him see me through the lattice; I was too afraid: and I dared only once let fall the water-melon; it made such a noise in dropping and rolling on the terrace: but, another day, when I had pared it nicely, and had

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swathed it up well among vine-leaves, dipped in sugar and sherbet, I was quite happy. I leaped and danced to have been so ingenious. I wonder what creature could have found and eaten it. I wish he were here, that I might ask him if he knew.

Countess. He quite forgot home then!

Zaida. When we could speak together at all, he spoke perpetually of those whom the calamity of war had separated from him.

Countess. It appears that you could comfort him in his distress, and did it willingly.

Zaida. It is delightful to kiss the eyelashes of the beloved: is it not? but never so delightful as when fresh tears are on them.

Countess. And even this too? you did this?

Zaida. Fifty times.

Countess. Insupportable!

He often then spoke about me?

Zaida. As sure as ever we met: for he knew I loved him the better when I heard him speak so fondly.

Countess (*to herself*). Is this possible? It may be . . of the absent, the unknown, the unfeared, the unsuspected.

Zaida. We shall now be so happy, all three.

Countess. How can we all live together?

Zaida. Now he is here, is there no bond of union?

Countess. Of union? of union? (*Aside.*) Slavery is a frightful thing! slavery for life too! And she released him from it. What then? Impossible! impossible! (*To Zaida.*) We are rich . .

Zaida. I am glad to hear it. Nothing anywhere goes on well without riches.

Countess. We can provide for you amply . .

Zaida. Our husband . .

Countess. Our! . . husband! . .

Zaida. Yes, yes; I know he is yours too; and you, being the elder and having children, are lady above all. He can tell you how little I want: a bath, a slave, a dish of pilau, one jonquil every morning, as usual; nothing more. But he must swear that he has kissed it first. No, he need not swear it; I may always see him do it, now.

Countess (*aside*). She agonizes me. (*To Zaida.*) Will you never be induced to return to your own country? Could not Ludolph persuade you?

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Zaida. He who could once persuade me anything, may now command me everything: when he says I must go, I go. But he knows what awaits me.

Countess. No, child! he never shall say it.

Zaida. Thanks, lady! eternal thanks! The breaking of his word would break my heart; and better *that* break first. Let the command come from you, and not from him.

Countess (calling aloud). Ludolph! Ludolph! hither! Kiss the hand I present to you, and never forget it is the hand of a preserver.

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XXI. DANTE AND GEMMA DONATI.

Gemma. We have now been blessed with seven children, my dear husband!

Dante. And the newly-born, as always happens, is the fairest, lovely as were all the rest.

Gemma. Whether it so happens or not, we always think so, the mother in particular. And your tenderness is like a mother's.

Dante. What a sweet smile is that, my Gemma! But do not talk long, although you talk with the voice and the serenity of an angel. How fresh you look! escaped from so great a danger, and so recently. A smile is ever the most bright and beautiful with a tear upon it. What is the dawn without its dew? The tear is rendered by the smile precious above the smile itself.

There is something playful, I perceive, in your thoughts, my little wife! Can not you as readily trust me with them as with the playfulness about them?

Gemma. I do not know whether I can.

Dante. Beware! I shall steady those lips with kisses if they are not soon more quiet. Irresolute! why do not you tell me at once what is thrilling and quivering at each corner of your beautiful mouth?

Gemma. I will, my Dante! But already it makes me graver.

Healthy as is the infant, it was predicted by the astrologer and caster of nativities, and the prediction has been confirmed by the most intelligent of nurses, that it must be our last.

Dante. While I look on it, I think I could not love another so well.

Gemma. And yet you have loved them all equally, tenderest of fathers, best of husbands!

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Dante. Say *happiest*, my Gemma! It was not always that you could have said it; and it may not be always; but it shall be now.

Gemma. Well spoken! yes, it shall. Therefore promise me that henceforward you will never again be a suitor for embassies abroad, or nail down your noble intellect to the coarse-grained wood of council-boards.

Dante. I can easily and willingly make that promise.

Gemma. Recollecting that they have caused you trouble enough already.

Dante. If they alone had occupied my mind, they would have contracted and abased it. The larger a plant is, the sooner it sickens and withers in close confinement, and in a place too low for it. But a mind that has never been strained to exertions, and troubled by anxieties, will never project far any useful faculty. The stream must swell before it fertilises. It is pleasant to gaze on green meadows and gentle declivities: but the soul, O my Gemma, that men look up to with long wonder, is suspended on rocks, and exposed to be riven by lightning. The eagle neither builds his nest nor pursues his quarry in the marsh.

Gemma. Should my Dante then in the piazza?

Dante. However, we must all, when called upon, serve our country as we can best.

Gemma. Despicable is the man who loveth not his country: but detestable is he who prefers even his country to her who worships him, supremely on earth, and solely.

Dante. To me a city is less than a home. The world around me is but narrow: the present age is but annual. I will plant my Tree in Paradise; I will water it with the waters of immortality; and my beloved shall repose beneath its shadow.

Gemma. O Dante! there are many who would be contented to die early, that after-ages might contemplate them as the lover did; young, ardent, radiant, uncrossed by fortune, and undisturbed by any anxiety but the gentlest. I am happier than poetry, with all its praise and all its fiction, could render me: let another be glorious. I have been truly blessed.

If Florence had never exiled you, if she had honoured you as highly as she must honour you hereafter, tell me, could you have loved her as you loved your Bice?

Dante. You also loved Bice.

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Gemma. Answer me plainly and directly, sly evader!

Dante. We can hardly love the terrestrial as we love the heavenly. The stars that fall on the earth are not stars of eternal light; they are not our hope; they are not our guidance; they often blight, they never purify. Distinctions might have become too precious in my sight, if never a thought of her had intervened.

Gemma. Indignant as you were at the injustice of your fellow-citizens, did not the recollection of the little maid honey your bitter bread, and quite console you?

Dante. I will pour into your faithful bosom not only all my present love, but all my past. I lost my country; I went into another; into many others. To men like me, irksome is it, O Gemma! to mount the stairs of princes; hard to beseech their favour; harder to feel the impossibility of requiting it; hardest of all to share it with the worthless. But I carried with me everywhere the memory of Bice: I carried with me that palladium which had preserved the citadel of my soul. Under her guard what evil could enter it? Before her image how faintly and evanescently fell on me the shadows of injury and grief!

Gemma. Brave, brave Dante! I love you for all things; nor least for your love of her. It was she, under God, who rendered you the perfect creature I behold in you. She animated you with true glory when she inspired you with the purity of her love. Worthier of it than I am, she left you on earth for me.

Dante. And with nothing on earth to wish beyond.

Ought I to be indignant that my country has neglected me? Do not men in all countries like those best who most resemble them? And would you wish me to resemble the multitude who are deluded? or would you rather that I were seated among the select who are in a situation to delude? My Gemma! I could never, by any knowledge or discipline, teach foxes to be honest, wolves to be abstemious, or vipers to be grateful. For the more ravenous I have excavated a pitfall, deep and durable as the foundations of the earth; to the reptile I toss the file. Let us love those who love us, and be contented to teach those who will hear us. Neither the voice nor the affections can extend beyond a contracted circle. But we may carry a wand with us and mark out with it that circle in every path of life. Never in future will I let men approach too near me. Familiarities are the aphides that imperceptibly suck out the juices intended for the

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germ of love. Contented with the few who can read my heart, and proud, my sweet Gemma, of the precious casket that encloses it, I am certainly this day the happiest of men.

Gemma. To-morrow you shall be happier.

Dante. By what possibility?

Gemma. It is too late in the evening to carry our infant to the baptismal font: but to-morrow, early in the morning, in the presence of God and angels, in the presence of the blessed Virgin, I name it Beatrice.

Dante. Gemma! she hears thee. Gemma! she loves thee for it more than she ever could love me: for this is heavenly.

Gemma. How much I owe her! Under her influence hath grown up into full maturity the happiness of my existence.

Dante. And of mine. Modesty is the bridemaid of Concord. She not only hangs her garland on the door of the nuptial chamber, but she bestrews with refreshing herbs the whole apartment every day of life. Without her where is Harmony? or what is Beauty? Without her, the sight of returning spring has bitter pangs in it: without her, the songs of love in the woodland, and the symbols of mated innocence on the tree apart, afflict the bosom, sensitive no longer but to reminiscences and wrath. Can it be wondered that she who held my first affections holds them yet? the same spirit in another form; the same beauty in another countenance, the same expression in another voice . . the girl Beatrice in the bride Gemma. O how much more than bride! but bride still!

Gemma. Kiss me, Dante! And now let me sleep! Gently! Do not disturb the child . . your Beatrice to-morrow. Further, further from the cradle! Your eyes upon her would surely awaken her. Beloved! beloved! how considerate and careful! I am sleepy . . can I sleep? I am too happy.

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XXII. LEONORA DI ESTE AND FATHER PANIGAROLA.

Leonora. You have then seen him, father? Have you been able, you who console so many, you who console even me, to comfort poor Torquato?

Panigarola. Madonna! the ears of the unhappy man are quickened by his solitude and his sorrow. He seemed aware, or suspicious at least, that somebody was listening at his prison-door; and the cell is so narrow that every sound in it is audible to those who stand outside.

Leonora. He might have whispered.

Panigarola. It would have been most imprudent.

Leonora. Said he nothing? not a word? . . to prove . . to prove that he had not lost his memory; his memory? of what? of reading his verses to me, and of my listening to them. Lucrezia listened to them as attentively as I did, until she observed his waiting for my applause first. When she applauded, he bowed so gracefully: when I applauded, he only held down his head. I was not angry at the difference. But tell me, good father! tell me, pray, whether he gave no sign of sorrow at hearing how soon I am to leave the world. Did you forget to mention it? or did you fear to pain him?

Panigarola. I mentioned it plainly, fully.

Leonora. And was he, was gentle Torquato, very sorry?

Panigarola. Be less anxious. He bore it like a Christian. He said deliberately, but he trembled and sighed, as Christians should sigh and tremble, that, although he grieved at your illness, yet that to

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write either in verse or prose, on such a visitation of Providence, was repugnant to his nature.*

Leonora. *He* said so? could *he* say it? But I thought you told me he feared a listener. Perhaps too he feared to awaken in me the sentiments he once excited. However it may be, already I feel the chilliness of the grave: his words breathe it over me. I would have entreated him to forget me; but to be forgotten before I had entreated it! . . O father, father!

Panigarola. Human vanity still is lingering on the precincts of the tomb. Is it criminal, is it censurable in him, to anticipate your wishes?

Leonora. Knowing the certainty and the nearness of my departure, he might at least have told me through you that he lamented to lose me.

Panigarola. Is there no voice within your heart that clearly tells you so?

Leonora. That voice is too indistinct, too troubled with the throbbings round about it. We women want sometimes to hear what we know; we die unless we hear what we doubt.

Panigarola. Madonna! this is too pasionate for the hour. But the tears you are shedding are a proof of your compunction. May the Virgin, and the Saints around her throne, accept and ratify it.

Leonora. Father! what were you saying? What were you asking me? Whether no voice whispered to me, assured me? I know not. I am weary of thinking. He must love me. It is not in the nature of such men ever to cease from loving. Was genius ever ungrateful? Mere talents are dry leaves, tost up and down by gusts of passion, and scattered and swept away; but Genius lies on the bosom of Memory, and Gratitude at her feet.

Panigarola. Be composed, be calm, be resigned to the will of Heaven, be ready for that journey's end where the happier who have gone before, and the enduring who soon must follow, will meet.

Leonora. I am prepared to depart; for I have struggled (God knows) to surmount what is insurmountable; and the wings of

* Mr. Milman, in his *Life of Tasso*, misinterprets the expression. *Genio* and *ingenio* do not always signify *genius*. His words are "a *certain secret repugnance of his genius*," but Tasso meant *temper* or *disposition*. *Ingenium* has the same meaning in Latin. Milton was not thinking about his genius when he wrote

"Cæteraque *ingenio* non subeunda meo."

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Angels will sustain and raise me, seeing my descent toward earth too rapid, too unresisted, and too prone. Pray, father, for my deliverance: pray also for poor Torquato's: do not separate us in your prayers. O! could he leave his prison as surely and as speedily as I shall mine! it would not be more thankfully. O! that bars of iron were as fragile as bars of clay! O! that princes were as merciful as Death! But tell him, tell Torquato . . go again; entreat, persuade, command him, to forget me.

Panigarola. Alas! even the command, even the command from you and from above, might not avail perhaps. You smile, Madonna!

Leonora. I die happy.

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PERICLES AND ASPASIA.

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PERICLES AND ASPASIA.

I. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

CLEONE! I write from Athens. I hasten to meet your reproaches, and to stifle them in my embrace. It was wrong to have left Miletus at all: it was wrong to have parted from you without entrusting you with my secret. No, no, neither was wrong. I have withstood many tears, my sweet Cleone, but never your's; you could always do what you would with me; and I should have been windbound by you on the Mæander, as surely and inexorably as the fleet at Aulis by Diana.

Ionia is far more beautiful than Attica, Miletus than Athens; for about Athens there is no verdure, no spacious and full and flowing river, few gardens, many olive-trees, so many indeed that we seem to be in an eternal cloud of dust. However, when the sea-breezes blow, this tree itself looks beautiful; it looks, in its pliable and undulating branches, irresolute as Ariadne when she was urged to fly, and pale as Orithyia when she was borne away.

II. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Come out, Aspasia, from among those olives. You would never have said a word about any such things, at such a time, unless you had met with an adventure. When you want to hide somewhat, you always run into the thickets of poetry. Pray leave Ariadne with Bacchus, she can not be safer; and Orithyia with Boreas, if you have any reverence for the mysteries of the gods. Now I have almost a mind to say, tell me nothing at all of what has happened to you since you left us. This would punish you as you deserve, for you know that you are dying to tell it. The venerable and good-natured old widow, Epimedea, will have trouble enough, I foresee, with her

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visitor from Asia. The Milesian kid will overleap her garden-wall, and browse and butt everywhere. I take it as a matter of certainty that you are with her, for I never heard you mention any other relative in Athens, and she was, I remember, the guest of your house. How she loved you, dear good woman! She would have given your father Axiochus all her wealth for you. But when you were seven years old you were worth seven times over what you are now. I loved you then myself. Well, I am resolved to relieve you of your secret.

Prodigal scatterer of precious hopes, and of smiles that seem to rise from the interest you feel, and not from the interest you excite, what victim have you crowned with flowers, and selected to fall at your altar?

III. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Spirit of divination! how dared you find me out? And how dared you accuse me of poetizing? You who poetize more extravagantly yourself. Mine, I do insist upon it, is no worse than we girls in general are apt to write: "and no better," you will reply, "than we now and then are condemned to listen to, or disposed to read."

Poetry is the weightless integument that our butterflies always shed in our path, ere they wing their way toward us. It is precisely of the same form, colour, and substance, for the whole generation. Are all mine well? and all yours? I shall be very angry to hear that mine are. If they do not weep, and look wan, and sicken, why then I must, out of very spite. But may the Gods in their wisdom keep not only their hearts, but their persons too, just where they are! I intend to be in love here at Athens. It is true, I do assure you, when I have time, and idleness, and courage for it.

Ay, ay, now your eyes are running over all the rest of the letter. Well, what have you found? where is the place? I will keep you in suspense no longer.

As soon as there was any light at all, we discovered, on the hill above the city, crowds of people and busy preparations. You are come to it.

IV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I was determined to close my letter when your curiosity was at the highest, that you might flutter and fall from the clouds like Icarus. I wanted two things: first, that you should bite your lip, an attitude in which you alone look pretty; and secondly, that you should say

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half-angrily, "This now is exactly like Aspasia." I will be remembered; and I will make you look just as I would have you.

How fortunate! to have arrived at Athens at dawn on the twelfth of Elaphebolion. On this day begin the festivals of Bacchus, and the theatre is thrown open at sunrise.

What a theatre! what an elevation! what a prospect of city and port, of land and water, of porticoes and temples, of men and heroes, of demi-gods and gods!

It was indeed my wish and intention, when I left Ionia, to be present at the first of the Dionysiacs; but how rarely are wishes and intentions so accomplished, even when winds and waters do not interfere!

I will now tell you all. No time was to be lost: so I hastened on shore in the dress of an Athenian boy who came over with his mother from Lemnos. In the giddiness of youth he forgot to tell me that, not being yet eighteen years old, he could not be admitted; and he left me on the steps. My heart sank within me; so many young men stared and whispered; yet never was stranger treated with more civility. Crowded as the theatre was (for the tragedy had begun) every one made room for me. When they were seated, and I too, I looked toward the stage; and behold there lay before me, but afar off, bound upon a rock, a more majestic form, and bearing a countenance more heroic, I should rather say more divine, than ever my imagination had conceived! I know not how long it was before I discovered that as many eyes were directed toward me as toward the competitor of the gods. I was neither flattered by it nor abashed. Every wish, hope, sigh, sensation, was successively with the champion of the human race, with his antagonist Zeus, and his creator Æschylus. How often, O Cleone, have we throbbed with his injuries! how often hath his vulture torn our breasts! how often have we thrown our arms around each other's neck, and half-renounced the religion of our fathers! Even your image, inseparable at other times, came not across me then; Prometheus stood between us. He had resisted in silence and disdain the cruellest tortures that Almightiness could inflict; and now arose the Nymphs of ocean, which heaved its vast waves before us; and now they descended with open arms and sweet benign countenances, and spake with pity; and the insurgent heart was mollified and quelled.

I sobbed; I dropt.

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V. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Is this telling me all? you faithless creature! There is much to be told when Aspasia faints in a theatre: and Aspasia in disguise!

My sweet and dear Aspasia! with all your beauty, of which you can not but be conscious, how is it possible you could have hoped to be undetected? Certainly there never was any woman, or even any man, so little vain as you are. Formerly you were rather so about your poetry: but now you really write it well, you have overcome this weakness; nay, you doubt whether your best verses are tolerable. You have told me this several times: and you always say what you think, unless when anyone might be hurt or displeased. I am glad the observation comes across me, for I must warn you upon it.

Take care then, Aspasia! do not leave off entirely all dissimulation. It is as feminine a virtue, and as necessary to a woman, as religion. If you are without it, you will have a grace the less, and (what you could worse spare) a sigh the more.

VI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I was not quite well when I wrote to you. When I am not quite well I must always write to you; I am better after it.

Where did I leave off?

Ah Cleone! Cleone! I have learnt your lesson; I am dissembling; it must not be with you. My tears are falling. I acted unworthily. And are these tears indeed for my fault against you? I can not tell; if I could, I would candidly. Everything that has happened, everything that shall happen hereafter, I will lay upon your knees. Counsel me; direct me. Even were I as sensible as you are, I should not be able to discover my own faults. The clearest eyes do not see the cheeks below, nor the brow above them.

To proceed then in my narrative. Everything appeared to me an illusion but the tragedy. What was divine seemed human, and what was human seemed divine.

An apparition of resplendent and unearthly beauty threw aside, with his slender arms, the youths, philosophers, magistrates, and generals, that surrounded me, with a countenance as confident, a motion as rapid, and a command as unresisted as a god.

"Stranger!" said he, "I come from Pericles, to offer you my assistance."

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I looked in his face; it was a child's.

"We have attendants here who shall conduct you from the crowd," said he.

"Venus and Cupid!" cried one.

"We are dogs," growled another.

"Worse!" rejoined a third, "we are slaves."

"Happy man! happy man! if thou art theirs," whispered the next in his ear, and followed us close behind.

I have since been informed that Pericles, who sate below us on the first seat, was the only man who did not rise. No matter; why should he? why did the rest? But it was very kind in him to send his cousin; I mean it was very kind for so proud a man.

Epimedea wept over me when I entered her house, and burnt incense before the Gods, and led me into my chamber.

"I have a great deal to say to you, my dear Aspasia; but you must go to sleep: your bath shall be ready at noon; but be sure you sleep till then," said she.

I did indeed sleep, and (will you believe it?) instantly and soundly. Never was bath more refreshing, never was reproof more gentle, than Epimedea's.

I found her at my pillow when I awoke, and she led me to the marble conch.

"Dear child!" said she, when I had stept in, "you do not know our customs. You should have come at once to my house; you never should have worn men's clothes: indeed you should not have gone to the theatre at all; but, being there, and moreover in men's habiliments, you should have taken care not to have fainted, as they say you did. My husband Thessalus would never hear of fainting; he used to tell me it was a bad example. But he fainted at last, poor man! and . . I minded his admonition. Why! what a lovely child you are grown, my little Aspasia! Is the bath too hot? Aspasia! can it be? why, you are no child at all!"

I really do believe that this idle discourse of Epimedea, which will tire you perhaps, was the only one that would not have wearied out my spirits. It neither made me think nor answer. What a privilege! what a blessing! how seldom to be enjoyed in our conferences with the silly! Ah! do not let me wrong the kind Epimedea! Those are not silly who have found the way to our hearts; and far other names do they deserve who open to us theirs.

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VII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The boy about whom I wrote to you in my letter of yesterday, is called Alcibiades.* He lisps and blushes at it. His cousin Pericles, you may have heard, enjoys the greatest power and reputation, both as an orator and a general, of any man in Athens. Early this morning the beautiful child came to visit me, and told me that when his cousin had finished his studies, which he usually had done about three hours after sunrise, he would desire him to come also.

I replied, "By no means do it, my beautiful and brave protector! Surely, on considering the matter, you will think you are taking too great a liberty with a person so distinguished."

"I take no liberties with any other," said he.

When I expressed in my countenance a little surprise at his impetuosity, he came forward and kissed my brow. Then said he, more submissively, "Pardon my rudeness. I like very well to be told what to do by those who are fond of me; but never to be told what not to do; and the more fond they are of me the less I like it. Because when they tell me what to do, they give me an opportunity of pleasing them; but when they tell me what not to do, it is a sign that I have displeased, or am likely to displease them. Beside . . I believe there are some other reasons, but they have quite escaped me.

"It is time I should return," said he, "or I shall forget all about the hour of his studies (I mean Pericles) and mine too."

I would not let him go however, but inquired who were his teachers, and repeated to him many things from Sappho and Alcæus and Pindar and Simonides. He was amazed, and told me he preferred them to Fate and Necessity, Pytho and Pythonissa.

I would now have kissed him in my turn, but he drew back, thinking (no doubt) that I was treating him like a child; that a kiss is never given but as the price of pardon; and that I had pardoned him before for his captiousness.

VIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! I foresee that henceforward you will admire the tragedy of Prometheus more than ever. But do not tell anyone, excepting so

* He had no right to be at the theatre; but he might have taken the liberty, for there was nobody in Athens whom he feared, even in his childhood. Thucydides calls him *a youth* in the twelfth year of the Peloponnesian war. He was, on the mother's side, grandson of Megacles, whose grand-daughter Isodoce married Cimon: her father Euryptolemus was cousin-german to Pericles.

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fond a friend as Cleone, that you prefer the author to Homer. I agree with you that the conception of such a drama is in itself a stupendous effort of genius; that the execution is equal to the conception; that the character of Prometheus is more heroic than any in heroic poetry; and that no production of the same extent is so magnificent and so exalted. But the Iliad is not a region; it is a continent; and you might as well compare this prodigy to it as the cataract of the Nile to the Ocean. In the one we are overpowered by the compression and burst of the element: in the other we are carried over an immensity of space, bounding the earth, not bounded by her, and having nothing above but the heavens.

Let us enjoy, whenever we have an opportunity, the delight of admiration, and perform the duties of reverence. May others hate what is admirable! We will hate likewise, O my Aspasia! when we can do no better. I am unable to foretell the time when this shall happen: it lies, I think, beyond the calculations of Meton.

I am happy to understand that the Athenians have such a philosopher among them. Hitherto we have been inclined to suppose that philosophy, at Athens, is partly an intricate tissue of subtile questions and illusory theories, knotted with syllogisms, and partly an indigested mass of unexamined assertions and conflicting dogmas. The Ionians are more silent, contemplative, and recluse. Knowing that Nature will not deliver her oracles in the crowd nor by sound of trumpet, they open their breasts to her in solitude with the simplicity of children, and look earnestly in her face for a reply. Meton and Democritus and Anaxagoras may perhaps lay their hands upon the leapings of your tettinxes, and moderate their chirping, but I apprehend that the genius of the people will always repose upon the wind-skins of the sophists. Comedy might be their corrector; but Comedy seems to think she has two offices to perform; from one side of the stage to explode absurdity, and from the other to introduce indecency. She might, under wise regulations (and these she should impose upon herself) render more service to a state than Philosophy could, in whatsoever other character. And I wonder that Aristophanes, strong in the poetical faculty, and unrivalled in critical acuteness, should not perceive that a dominion is within his reach which is within the reach of no mortal beside; a dominion whereby he may reform the manners, dictate the pursuits, and regulate the affections of his countrymen. Perhaps he never could have

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done it so effectually, had he been better and begun otherwise; but having, however unworthy might have been the means and methods, seized upon their humours, they now are as pliable to him as waxen images to Thessalian witches. He keeps them before the fire he has kindled, and he has only to sing the right song.

Beware, my dear Aspasia, never to offend him: for he holds more terrors at his command than Æschylus. The tragic poet rolls the thunder that frightens, the comic wields the lightning that kills. Aristophanes has the power of tossing you among the populace of a thousand cities for a thousand years.

A great poet is more powerful than Sesostris, and a wicked one more formidable than Phalaris.

IX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Epimedea has been with me in my chamber. She asked me whether the women of Ionia had left off wearing ear-rings. I answered that I believe they always had worn them, and that they were introduced by the Persians, who received them from nations more remote.

"And do you think yourself too young," said she, "for such an ornament?" producing at the same instant a massy pair, inlaid with the largest emeralds. "Alas! alas!" said she, "your mother neglected you strangely. There is no hole in the ear, right or left! We can mend that, however; I know a woman who will bring us the prettiest little pan of charcoal, with the prettiest little steel rod in it; and, before you can cry out, one ear lets light through. These are yours," said she, "and so shall everything be when I am gone . . house, garden, quails, leveret."

"Generous Epimedea!" said I, "do not say things that pain me. I will accept a part of the present; I will wear these beautiful emeralds on one arm. Thinking of nailing them in my ears, you resolve to make me steady; but I am unwilling they should become dependencies of Attica."

"All our young women wear them; the Goddesses too."

"The Goddesses are in the right," said I; "their ears are marble; but I do not believe any one of them would tell us that women were made to be the settings of pearls and emeralds."

I had taken one, and was about to kiss her, when she said, "Do not leave me an odd ear-ring: put the other in the hair."

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"Epimedea," said I, "I have made a vow never to wear on the head anything but one single flower, a single wheat-ear, green or yellow, and ivy or vine-leaves: the number of these are not mentioned in the vow."

"Rash child!" said Epimedea, shaking her head, "I never made but two vows; one was when I took a husband."

"And the other? Epimedea!"

"No matter," said she; "it might be, for what I know, never to do the like again."

X. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Pericles has visited me. After many grave and gentle inquiries, often suspended, all relating to my health; and after praises of Miletus, and pity for my friends left behind, he told me that, when he was quite assured of my recovery from the fatigues of the voyage, he hoped I would allow him to collect from me, at my leisure hours, the information he wanted on the literature of Ionia. Simple-hearted man! in praising the authors of our country, he showed me that he knew them perfectly, from first to last. And now indeed his energy was displayed: I thought he had none at all. With how sonorous and modulated a voice did he repeat the more poetical passages of our elder historians! and how his whole soul did lean upon Herodotus! Happily for me, he observed not my enthusiasm. And now he brought me into the presence of Homer. "We claim him," said he; "but he is yours. Observe with what partiality he always dwells on Asia! How infinitely more civilised are Glaucus and Sarpedon than any of the Grecians he was called upon to celebrate! Priam, Paris, Hector, what polished men! Civilisation has never made a step in advance, and never will, on those countries; she had gone so far in the days of Homer. He keeps Helen pretty rigorously out of sight, but he opens his heart to the virtues of Andromache. What a barbarian is the son of a goddess! Pallas must seize him by the hair to avert the murder of his leader; but at the eloquence of the Phrygian king the storm of the intractable homicide bursts in tears."

"And Æschylus," said I, but could not continue; blushes rose into my cheek, and pained me at the recollection of my weakness.

"He has left us," said Pericles, who pretended not to have perceived it; "I am grieved that my prayers were inadequate to detain

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him. But what prayers or what expostulations can influence the lofty mind, labouring and heaving under injustice and indignity? Æschylus knew he merited, by his genius and his services, the gratitude and admiration of the Athenians. He saw others preferred before him, and hoisted sail. At the rumour of his departure such was the consternation as if the shield of Pallas in the Parthenon had dropt from her breast upon the pavement. That glory shines now upon the crown of Hiero which has sunk for Athens."

"You have still great treasures left," said I; for he was moved.

"True," replied he, "but will not every one remark who hears the observation, that we know not how to keep them, and have never weighed them?"

I sate silent; he resumed his serenity.

"We ought to change places," said he, "at the feet of the poets. Æschylus, I see, is yours; Homer is mine. Aspasia should be a Pallas to Achilles; and Pericles a subordinate power, comforting and consoling the afflicted demi-god. Impetuosity, impatience, resentment, revenge itself, are pardonable sins in the very softest of your sex: on brave endurance rises *our* admiration."

"I love those better who endure with constancy," said I.

"Happy!" replied he, "thrice happy! O Aspasia, the constancy thus tried and thus rewarded!"

He spoke with tenderness; he rose with majesty; bowed to Epimedea: touched gently, scarcely at all, the hand I presented to him, bent over it, and departed.

XI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I told you I would love, O Cleone! but I am so near it that I dare not.

Tell me what I am to do; I can do anything but write and think.

Pericles has not returned.

I am nothing here in Athens.

Five days are over; six almost.

O what long days are these of Elaphebolion!

XII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Take heed, Aspasia! All orators are deceivers; and Pericles is the greatest of orators.

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I will write nothing more, lest you should attend in preference to any other part of my letter.

Yes; I must repeat my admonition: I must speak out plainly; I must try other words . . stronger . . more frightful. Love of supremacy, miscalled political glory, finds most, and leaves all, dishonest.

The Gods and Goddesses watch over and preserve you, and send you safe home again!

XIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Fear not for me, Cleone! Pericles has attained the summit of glory; and the wisdom and virtue that acquired it for him are my sureties.

A great man knows the value of greatness: he dares not hazard it; he will not squander it. Imagine you that the confidence and affection of a people, so acute, so vigilant, so jealous, as the Athenians, would have rested firmly and constantly on one inconstant and infirm.

If he loves me the merit is not mine; the fault will be if he ceases.

XIV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

I must and will fear for you, and the more because I perceive you are attracted as the bees are, by an empty sound, the fame of your admirer. You love Pericles for that very quality which ought to have set you on your guard against him. In contentions for power, the philosophy and the poetry of life are dropt and trodden down. Domestic affections can no more bloom and flourish in the hardened race-course of politics, than flowers can find nourishment in the pavement of the streets. In the politician the whole creature is factitious; if ever he speaks as before, he speaks either from memory or invention.

But such is your beauty, such your genius, it may alter the nature of things. Endowed with the power of Circe, you will exert it oppositely, and restore to the most selfish and most voracious of animals the uprightness and dignity of man.

XV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

It is not wisdom in itself, O Aspasia! it is the manner of imparting it that affects the soul, and alone deserves the name of eloquence. I have never been moved by any but yours.

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Is it the beauty that shines over it, is it the voice that ripens it, giving it those lovely colours, that delicious freshness; is it the modesty and diffidence with which you present it to us, looking for nothing but support? Sufficient were any one of them singly; but all united have come forward to subdue me, and have deprived me of my courage, my self-possession, and my repose.

I dare not hope to be beloved, Aspasia! I did hope it once in my life, and have been disappointed. Where I sought for happiness none is offered to me: I have neither the sunshine nor the shade.

So unfortunate in earlier days, ought I, ten years later, to believe that she, to whom the earth, with whatever is beautiful and graceful in it, bows prostrate, will listen to me as her lover? I dare not; too much have I dared already. But if, O Aspasia! I should sometimes seem heavy and dull in conversation, when happier men surround you, pardon my infirmity.

I have only one wish; I may not utter it: I have only one fear; this at least is not irrational, and I will own it; the fear that Aspasia could never be sufficiently happy with me.

XVI. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Do you doubt, O Pericles, that I shall be sufficiently happy with you? This doubt of yours assures me that I shall be.

I throw aside my pen to crown the Gods. And I worship thee first, O Pallas! who protectest the life, enlightenest the mind, establishest the power, and exaltest the glory, of Pericles.

XVII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

I tremble both for you and your lover. The people of Athens may applaud at first the homage paid to beauty and genius; nevertheless there are many whose joy will spring from malignity, and who will exult at what they think (I know not whether quite unjustly) a weakness in Pericles.

I shall always be restless about you. Let me confess to you, I do not like your sheer democracies. What are they good for? Why yes, they have indeed their use; the filth and ferment of the compost are necessary for raising rare plants.

O how I wish we were again together in that island on our river which we called the *Fortunate!* It was almost an island when your

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father cut across the isthmus of about ten paces, to preserve the swan-nest.

Xeniades has left Miletus. We know not whither he is gone, but we presume to his mines in Lemnos. It was always with difficulty he could be persuaded to look after his affairs. He is too rich, too young, too thoughtless. But since you left Miletus, we have nothing here to detain him.

I wish I could trifle with you about your Pericles. Any wager, he is the only lover who never wrote verses upon you.

In a politician a verse is an ostracism.

XVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

My Pericles (mine, mine he is) *has* written verses upon me; not many, nor worth his prose, even the shortest sentence of it. But you will read them with pleasure for their praises of Miletus.

No longer ago than yesterday an ugly young philosopher declared his passion for me, as you shall see. I did not write anything back to Pericles: I did to the other. I will not run the risk of having half my letter left unread by you, in your hurry to come into the poetry.

Here it all is:

PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Flower of Ionia's fertile plains,
Where Pleasure leagued with Virtue reigns,
Where the Pierian Maids of old,
Yea, long ere Ilion's tale was told,
Too pure, too sacred for our sight,
Descended with the silent night
To young Arctinus, and Mæander
Delay'd his course for Melesander!
If there be city on the earth
Proud in the children of her birth,
Wealth, science, beauty, story, song,
These to Miletus all belong.
To fix the diadem on his brow
For ever, one was wanting . . thou.

I could not be cruel to such a suitor, even if he asked me for pity. Love makes one half of every man foolish, and the other half cunning. Pericles touched me on the side of Miletus, and Socrates came up to me straightforward from Prometheus:

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SOCRATES TO ASPASIA.

He who stole fire from heaven,
Long heav'd his bold and patient breast; 'twas riven
By the Caucasian bird and bolts of Jove.
Stolen that fire have I,
And am enchain'd to die
By every jealous Power that frowns above.

I call not upon thee again
To hear my vows and calm my pain,
Who sittest high enthron'd
Where Venus rolls her gladsome star,
Propitious Love! But thou disown'd
By sire and mother, whosoe'er they are,
Unblest in form and name, Despair!
Why dost thou follow that bright demon? why
His purest altar art thou always nigh?

I was sorry that Socrates should suffer so much for me.

Pardon the fib, Cleone! let it pass: I was sorry just as we all are upon such occasions, and wrote him this consolation:

O thou who sittest with the wise,
And searchest higher lore,
And openest regions to their eyes
Unvisited before!
I'd run to loose thee if I could,
Nor let the vulture taste thy blood.
But, pity! pity! Attic bee!
'Tis happiness forbidden me.

Despair is not for good or wise,
And should not be for love;
We all must bear our destinies
And bend to those above.
Birds flying o'er the stormy seas
Alight upon their proper trees,
Yet wisest men not always know
Where they should stop or whither go.

XIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I am quite ashamed of Alcibiades, quite angry with him. What do you imagine he has been doing? He listened to my conversation with Pericles, on the declaration of love from the *Philosopher Bound*, and afterward to the verses I repeated in answer to his, which pleased my Pericles extremely, not perhaps for themselves, but

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because I had followed his advice in writing them, and had returned to him with the copy so speedily.

Alcibiades said he did not like them at all, and could write better himself. We smiled at this; and his cousin said, "Do then, my boy!"

Would you believe it? he not only wrote, but I fear (for he declares he did) actually sent these:

O Satyr-son of Sophroniscus!
Would Alcon cut me a hibiscus,
I'd wield it as the goatherds do,
And swing thee a sound stroke or two,
Bewilder, if thou canst, us boys,
Us, or the sophists, with thy toys—
Thy *kalokagathons* . . beware!
Keep to the good, and leave the fair.

Could he really be the composer? what think you? or did he get any of his wicked friends to help him? The verses are very bold, very scandalous, very shocking. I am vext and sorry; but what can be done? We must seem to know nothing about the matter.

The audacious little creature . . not very little, he is within four fingers of my height . . is half in love with me. He flames up at the mention of Socrates: can he be jealous?

Pericles tells me that the philosophers here are as susceptible of malice as of love. It may be so, for the plants which are sweet in some places are acrid in others.

He said to me, smiling, "I shall be represented in their schools as a sophist, because Aspasia and Alcibiades were unruly. O that boy! who knows but his mischievous verses will be a reason sufficient, in another year, why I am unable to command an army or harangue an assembly of the people?"

XX. XENIADES TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! Aspasia! have you forgotten me? have you forgotten *us?* Our childhood was one, our earliest youth was undivided. Why should you not see me? Did you fear that you would have to reproach me for any fault I have committed? This would have pained you formerly; ah, how lately!

Your absence . . not absence . . flight . . has broken my health, and left me fever and frenzy. Eumedes is certain I can only recover

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my health by composure. Foolish man! as if composure were more easy to recover than health. Was there ever such a madman as to say, "You will never have the use of your limbs again unless you walk and run!"

I am weary of advice, of remonstrance, of pity, of everything; above all, of life.

Was it anger (how dared I be angry with you?) that withheld me from imploring the sight of you? Was it pride? Alas! what pride is left me? I am preferred no longer; I am rejected, scorned, loathed. Was it always so? Well may I ask the question; for everything seems uncertain to me but my misery. At times I know not whether I am mad or dreaming. No, no, Aspasia! the past was a dream, the present is a reality. The mad and the dreaming do not shed tears as I do. And yet in these bitter tears are my happiest moments; and some angry demon knows it, and presses my temples that there shall fall but few.

You refused to admit me. I asked too little, and deserved the refusal. Come to me. This you will not refuse, unless you are bowed to slavery. Go, tell your despot this, with my curses and defiance.

I am calmer, but insist. Spare yourself, Aspasia, one tear, and not by an effort, but by a duty.

XXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Of all men living, what man do you imagine has come to Athens? Insensate! now you know. What other, so beloved, would ever have left Miletus! I wish I could be convinced that your coldness or indifference had urged him to this extravagance. I can only promise you we will not detain him. Athens is not a refuge for the perfidious or the flighty. But if he is unfortunate; what shall we do with him? Do? I will tell him to return. Expect him hourly.

XXII. ASPASIA TO XENIADES.

I am pained to my innermost heart that you are ill.

Pericles is not the person you imagine him. Behold his billet! And can not you think of me with equal generosity?

True, we saw much of each other in our childhood, and many childish things we did together. This is the reason why I went out of your way as much as I could afterward. There is another too. I

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hoped you would love more the friend that I love most. How much happier would she make you than the flighty Aspasia! We resemble each other too much, Xeniades! we should never have been happy, so ill-mated. Nature hates these alliances: they are like those of brother and sister. I never loved any one but Pericles: none else attracts the admiration of the world. I stand, O Xeniades! not only above slavery, but above splendour, in that serene light which Homer describes as encompassing the Happy on Olympus. I will come to visit you within the hour; be calm, be contented! love me, but not too much, Xeniades!

XXIII. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Xeniades, whom I loved a little in my childhood, and (do not look serious now, my dearest Pericles!) a very little afterward, is sadly ill. He was always, I know not how, extravagant in his wishes, although not so extravagant as many others; and what do you imagine he wishes now? He wishes . . but he is very ill, so ill he can not rise from his bed, . . that I would go and visit him. I wonder whether it would be quite considerate: I am half inclined to go, if you approve of it.

Poor youth! he grieves me bitterly.

I shall not weep before him; I have wept so much here. Indeed, indeed, I wept, my Pericles, only because I had written too unkindly.

XXIV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Do what your heart tells you: yes, Aspasia, do *all* it tells you. Remember how august it is: it contains the temple, not only of Love, but of Conscience; and a whisper is heard from the extremity of the one to the extremity of the other.

Bend in pensiveness, even in sorrow, on the flowery bank of youth, whereunder runs the stream that passes irreversibly! let the garland drop into it, let the hand be refreshed by it; but may the beautiful feet of Aspasia stand firm!

XXV. XENIADES TO ASPASIA.

You promised you would return. I thought you only broke hearts, not promises.

It is now broad daylight: I see it clearly, although the blinds are

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closed. A long sharp ray cuts off one corner of the room, and we shall hear the crash presently.

Come; but without that pale silent girl: I hate her. Place her on the other side of you, not on mine.

And this plane-tree gives no shade whatever. We will sit in some other place.

No, no; I will not have you call her to us. Let her play where she is . . the notes are low . . she plays sweetly.

XXVI. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

See what incoherency! He did not write it; not one word. The slave who brought it, told me that he was desired by the guest to write his orders, whenever he found his mind composed enough to give any.

About four hours after my departure, he called him mildly, and said, "I am quite recovered."

He gave no orders however, and spake nothing more for some time. At last he raised himself up, and rested on his elbow, and began (said the slave) like one inspired. The slave added, that finding he was indeed quite well again, both in body and mind, and capable of making as fine poetry as any man in Athens, he had written down every word with the greatest punctuality; and that, looking at him for more, he found he had fallen into as sound a slumber as a reaper's.

"Upon this I ran off with the verses," said he.

XXVII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Comfort him. But you must love him, if you do. Well! comfort him. Forgive my inconsiderateness. You will not love him now. You would not receive him when your bosom was without an occupant. And yet you saw him daily. Others, all others, pine away before him. I wish I could solace my soul with poetry, as you have the power of doing. In all the volumes I turn over, I find none exactly suitable to my condition: part expresses my feelings, part flies off from them to something more light and vague. I do not believe the best writers of love-poetry ever loved. How could they write if they did? where could they collect the thoughts, the words, the courage? Alas! alas! men can find all these, Aspasia, and leave us after they have found them. But in Xeniades there is no fault

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whatever: he never loved me: he never said he did: he fled only from my immodesty in loving him. Dissembler as I was, he detected it. Do pity him, and help him: but pity me too, who am beyond your help.

XXVIII. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Tears, O Aspasia, do not dwell long upon the cheeks of youth. Rain drops easily from the bud, rests on the bosom of the maturer flower, and breaks down that one only which hath lived its day.

Weep, and perform the offices of friendship. The season of life, leading you by the hand, will not permit you to linger at the tomb of the departed; and Xeniades, when your first tear fell upon it, entered into the number of the blessed.

XXIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

What shall I say to you, tender and sweet Cleone! The wanderer is in the haven of happiness; the restless has found rest.

Weep not; I have shed all your tears . . not all . . they burst from me again.

XXX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Oh! he was too beautiful to live! Is there anything that shoots through the world so swiftly as a sunbeam! Epialtes has told me everything. He sailed back without waiting at the islands; by your orders, he says.

What hopes could I, with any prudence, entertain? The chaplet you threw away would have cooled and adorned my temples; but how could he ever love another who had once loved you? I am casting my broken thoughts before my Aspasia: the little shells upon the shore, that the storm has scattered there, and that heedless feet have trampled on.

I have prayed to Venus; but I never prayed her to turn toward me the fondness that was yours. I fancied, I even hoped, you might accept it; and my prayer was, "Grant I may never love! Afar from me, O Goddess! be the malignant warmth that dries up the dews of friendship."

XXXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Pericles has insisted on it that I should change the air, and has recommended to me an excursion to the borders of the state. Your

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"If you pass them a little way," said he, "you will come to Tanagra, and that will inflame you with ambition."

The honour in which I hold the name of Corinna induced me to undertake a journey to her native place. Never have I found a people so hospitable as the inhabitants. Living at a distance from the sea, they are not traders, nor adventurers, nor speculators, nor usurers, but cultivate a range of pleasant hills, covered with vines. Hermes is the principal God they worship; yet I doubt whether a single prayer was ever offered up to him by a Tanagrian for success in thievery.

The beauty of Corinna is no less celebrated than her poetry. I remarked that the women speak of it with great exultation, while the men applaud her genius; and I asked my venerable host Agesilaus how he could account for it.

"I can account for nothing that you ladies do," said he, "although I have lived among you seventy-five years: I only know that it was exactly the contrary while she was living. We youths were rebuked by you when we talked about her beauty; and the rebuke was only softened by the candid confession, that she was *clever . . in her way*."

"Come back with me to Athens, O Agesilaus!" said I, "and we will send Aristophanes to Tanagra."

XXXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I have been reading all the poetry of Corinna that I could collect. Certainly it is better than Hesiod's, or even than Myrtis's, who taught her and Pindar, not the rudiments of the art, for this is the only art in which the rudiments are incommunicable, but what was good, what was bad, in her verses; why it was so, and how she might correct the worse and improve the better.

Hesiod, who is also a Bœotian, is admirable for the purity of his life and soundness of his precepts, but there is hardly a trace of poetry in his ploughed field.

I find in all his writings but one verse worth transcribing, and that only for the melody:

"In a soft meadow and on vernal flowers."

I do not wonder he was opposed to Homer. What an advantage to the enemies of greatness (that is, to mankind) to be able to match one so low against one so lofty!

us a[illegible]e Greek army before Troy would have been curious to listen to

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a dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles, but would have been transported with ecstasy to have been present at one between the king of men and Thersites.

There are few who possess all the poetry of any voluminous author. I doubt whether there are ten families in Athens in which all the plays of Æschylus are preserved. Many keep what pleases them most: few consider that every page of a really great poet has something in it which distinguishes him from an inferior order: something which, if insubstantial as the aliment, serves at least as a solvent to the aliment, of strong and active minds.

I asked my Pericles what he thought of Hesiod.

"I think myself more sagacious," said he. "Hesiod found out that half was more than all; I have found out that one is."

XXXIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

A slave brought to me, this morning, an enormous load of papers, as many as he could carry under both arms. They are treatises by the most celebrated philosophers. Some hours afterward, when the sun was declining, Pericles came in, and asked me if I had examined or looked over any portion of them. I told him I had opened those only which bore the superscription of famous names, but that, unless he would assist me, I was hopeless of reconciling one part with another in the same writers.

"The first thing requisite," said I, "is, that as many as are now at Athens should meet together, and agree upon a nomenclature of terms. From definitions we may go on to propositions; but we can not make a step unless the foot rests somewhere."

He smiled at me. "Ah my Aspasia!" said he, "Philosophy does not bring her sons together; she portions them off early, gives them a scanty stock of worm-eaten furniture, a chair or two on which it is dangerous to sit down, and at least as many arms as utensils; then leaves them: they seldom meet afterward."

"But could not they be brought together by some friend of the mother?" said I, laughing.

"Aspasia," answered he, "you have lived but few years in the world, and with only one philosopher . . yourself."

"I will not be contented with a compliment," said I, "and least of all from you. Explain to me the opinions of those about you."

He traced before me the divergencies of every sect, from our

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countryman Thales to those now living. Epimedea sat with her eyes wide open, listening attentively. When he went away, I asked her what she thought of his discourse. She half closed her eyes, not from weariness, but (as many do) on bringing out of obscurity into light a notable discovery; and, laying her forefinger on my arm, "You have turned his head," said she. "He will do no longer; he used to be plain and coherent; and now . . did ever mortal talk so widely? I could not understand one word in twenty, and what I could understand was sheer nonsense."

"Sweet Epimedea!" said I, "this is what I should fancy to be no such easy matter."

"Ah! you are growing like him already," said she; "I should not be surprised to find, some morning, a cupola at the top of this pretty head."

Pericles, I think I never told you, has a little elevation on the crown of his; I should rather say his head has a crown, others have none.

XXXIV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Do, my dear Aspasia, continue to write to me about the poets; and if you think there is anything of Myrtis or Corinna, which is wanting to us at Miletus, copy it out. I do not always approve of the Trilogies. Nothing can be more tiresome, hardly anything more wicked, than a few of them. It may be well occasionally to give something of the historical form to the dramatic, as it is occasionally to give something of the dramatic to the historical; but never to turn into ridicule and buffoonery the virtuous, the unfortunate, or the brave. Whatever the Athenians may boast of their exquisite judgment, their delicate perceptions, this is a perversion of intellect in its highest place, unworthy of a Thracian. There are many bad tragedies both of Æschylus and Sophocles, but none without beauties, few without excellences: I tremble then at your doubt. In another century it may be impossible to find a collection of the whole, unless some learned and rich man, like Pericles, or some protecting king, like Hiero, should preserve them in his library.

XXXV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Prudently have you considered how to preserve all valuable authors. The cedar doors of a royal library fly open to receive them: ay, there they will be safe . . and untouched.

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Hiero is however no barbarian: he deserves a higher station than a throne; and he is raised to it. The protected have placed the protector where neither the malice of men nor the power of Gods can reach him . . beyond Time . . above Fate.

XXXVI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

From the shortness of your last, I am quite certain that you are busy for me in looking out pieces of verse. If you cannot find any of Myrtis or Corinna, you may do what is better; you may compose a panegyric on all of our sex who have excelled in poetry. This will earn for you the same good office, when the world shall produce another Aspasia.

Having been in Bœotia, you must also know a great deal more of Pindar than we do. Write about any of them; they all interest me; and my mind has need of exercise. It is still too fond of throwing itself down on one place.

XXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

And so, Cleone, you wish me to write a eulogy on Myrtis and Corinna, and all the other poetesses that ever lived; and this is for the honour of our sex! Ah Cleone! no studied eulogy does honour to anyone. It is always considered, and always ought to be, as a piece of pleading, in which the pleader says everything the most in favour of his client, in the most graceful and impressive manner he can. There is a city of Greece, I hear, in which reciprocal flattery is so necessary, that, whenever a member of the assembly dies, his successor is bound to praise him before he takes the seat.

I do not speak this from my own knowledge; indeed I could hardly believe in such frivolity, until I asked Pericles if it were true; or rather, if there were any foundation at all for the report.

"Perfectly true," said he, "but the citizens of this city are now become our allies; therefore do not curl your lip, or I must uncurl it, being an archon."

Myrtis and Corinna have no need of me. To read and recommend their works, to point out their beauties and defects, is praise enough.

"How!" methinks you exclaim. "To point out defects! is that praising?"

Yes, Cleone; if with equal good faith and accuracy you point out their beauties too. It is only thus a fair estimate can be made; and

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it is only by such fair estimate that a writer can be exalted to his proper station. If you toss up the scale too high, it descends again rapidly below its equipoise; what it contains drops out, and people catch at it, scatter it, and lose it.

We not only are inclined to indulge in rather more than a temperate heat (of what we would persuade ourselves is wholesome severity) toward the living, but even to peer sometimes into the tomb, with a wolfish appetite for an unpleasant odour.

We must patronise, we must pull down; in fact, we must be in mischief, men or women.

If we are capable of showing what is good in another, and neglect to do it, we omit a duty; we omit to give rational pleasure, and to conciliate right good-will; nay more, we are abettors, if not aiders, in the vilest fraud, the fraud of purloining from respect. We are entrusted with letters of great interest; what a baseness not to deliver them!

XXXVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

It is remarkable that Athens, so fertile in men of genius, should have produced no women of distinction, while Bœotia, by no means celebrated for brightness of intellect in either sex, presented to the admiration of the world her Myrtis and Corinna. At the feet of Myrtis it was that Pindar gathered into his throbbing breast the scattered seeds of poetry; and it was under the smile of the beautiful Corinna that he drew his inspiration and wove his immortal crown.

He never quite overcame his grandiloquence. The animals we call *half-asses*, by a word of the sweetest sound, although not the most seducing import, he calls

"The daughters of the tempest-footed steeds!"

O Fortune! that the children of so illustrious a line should carry sucking-pigs into the market-place, and cabbage-stalks out of it!

XXXIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Will you always leave off, Aspasia, at the very moment you have raised our expectations to the highest? A witticism, and a sudden spring from your seat, lest we should see you smile at it, these are your ways; shame upon you! Are you determined to continue all your life in making everyone wish something?

Pindar should not be treated like ordinary men.

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XL. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I have not treated Pindar like an ordinary man; I conducted him into the library of Cleone, and left him there. However, I would have my smile out, behind the door. The verse I quoted, you may be sure, is much admired by the learned, and no less by the brave and worthy men whom he celebrates for charioteership, and other such dexterities; but we of old Miletus have been always taught that words should be subordinate to ideas, and we never place the pedestal on the head of the statue.

Now do not tell anybody that I have spoken a single word in dispraise of Pindar. Men are not too apt to admire what is admirable in their superiors, but on the contrary are apt to detract from them, and to seize on anything which may tend to lower them. Pindar would not have written so exquisitely if no fault had ever been found with him. He would have wandered on among such inquiries as those he began in:

"Shall I sing the wide-spreading and noble Ismenus? or the beautiful and white-ankled Melie? or the glorious Cadmus? or the mighty Hercules? or the blooming Bacchus?"

Now a poet ought to know what he is about before he opens his lips: he ought not to ask, like a poor fellow in the street, "Good people! what song will you have?" This however was not the fault for which he was blamed by Corinna. In our censures we are less apt to consider the benefit we may confer than the ingenuity we can display.

She said, "Pindar! you have brought a sack of corn to sow a perch of land; and, instead of sprinkling it about, you have emptied the sack at the first step."

Enough: this reproof formed his character: it directed his beat, it singled his aim, it concentrated his forces. It was not by the precepts of Corinna, it was not by her example, it was by one witticism of a wise and lovely woman, that he far excels all other poets in disdain of triviality and choice of topics. He is sometimes very tedious to us in his long stories of families, but we may be sure he was not equally so to those who were concerned in the genealogy. We are amused at his cleverness in saving the shoulder of Pelops from the devouring jaw of a hungry god. No doubt he mends the matter; nevertheless he tires us.

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Many prefer his Dithyrambics to his Olympian, Isthmian, Pythian, and Nemean Odes: I do not; nor is it likely that he did himself. We may well suppose that he exerted the most power on the composition, and the most thought on the correction, of the poems he was to recite before kings and nations, in honour of the victors at those solemn games. Here the choruses and bands of music were composed of the first singers and players in the world; in the others there were no performers but such as happened to assemble on ordinary festivals, or at best at a festival of Bacchus. In the Odes performed at the games, although there is not always perfect regularity of corresponding verse, there is always enough of it to satisfy the most fastidious ear. In the Dithyrambics there is no order whatsoever, but verses and half-verses of every kind, cemented by vigorous and sounding prose.

I do not love dances upon stilts; they may excite the applauses and acclamations of the vulgar, but we, Cleone, exact the observance of established rules, and never put on slippers, however richly embroidered, unless they pair.

XLI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

We hear that between Athens and Syracuse there has always been much communication. Let me learn what you have been able to collect about the lives of Pindar and Æschylus in Sicily.

Is it not strange that the two most high-minded of poets should have gone to reside in a foreign land, under the dominion of a king?

I am ashamed of my question already. Such men are under no dominion. It is not in their nature to offend against the laws, or to think about what they are, or who administers them; and they may receive a part of their sustenance from kings, as well as from cows and bees. We will reproach them for emigration, when we reproach a man for lying down in his neighbour's field, because the grass is softer in it than in his own.

XLII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Not an atom have I been able to collect in regard to the two poets, since they went to the court of Hiero; but I can give you as correct and as full information as if I had been seated between them all the while.

Hiero was proud of his acquisition; the courtiers despised them,

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vexed them whenever they could, and entreated them to command their services and rely upon their devotion. What more? They esteemed each other; but poets are very soon too old for mutual love.

He who can add one syllable to this, shall have the hand of Cleone.

XLIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Torturing girl! and you, Aspasia, may justly say *ungrateful girl!* to me. You did not give me what I asked for, but you gave me what is better, a glimpse of you. This is the manner in which you used to trifle with me, making the heaviest things light, the thorniest tractable, and throwing your own beautiful brightness wherever it was most wanted.

But do not slip from me again. Æschylus, we know, is dead; we hear that Pindar is. Did they die abroad?

Ah poor Xeniades! how miserable to be buried by the stranger!

XLIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Æschylus, at the close of his seventieth year, died in Sicily. I know not whether Hiero received him with all the distinction he merited, or rewarded him with the same generosity as Pindar; nor indeed have I been able to learn, what would very much gratify me, that Pindar, who survived him four years and died lately, paid those honours to the greatest man of the most glorious age since earth rose out of chaos, which he usually paid with lavish hand to the prosperous and powerful. I hope he did; but the words *wealth* and *gold* occur too often in the poetry of Pindar.

Perhaps I may wrong him, for a hope is akin to a doubt; it may be that I am mistaken, since we have not all his poems even here in Athens. Several of these too, particularly the Dithyrambics, are in danger of perishing. The Odes on the victors at the games will be preserved by the vanity of the families they celebrate; and, being thus safe enough for many years, their own merit will sustain them afterward. It is owing to a stout nurse that many have lived to an extreme old age.

Some of the Odes themselves are of little value in regard to poetry, but he exercises in all of them as much dexterity as the worthies he applauds had displayed in their exploits.

To compensate the disappointment you complained of, I will now

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transcribe for you an ode of Corinna to her native town, being quite sure it is not in your collection. Let me first inform you that the exterior of the best houses in Tanagra is painted with historical scenes, adventures of Gods, allegories, and other things; and under the walls of the city flows the rivulet Thermodon. This it is requisite to tell you of so small and so distant a place.

CORINNA TO TANAGRA.

From Athens.

Tanagra! think not I forget
Thy beautifully-storied streets;
Be sure my memory bathes yet
In clear Thermodon, and yet greets
The blithe and liberal shepherd-boy,
Whose sunny bosom swells with joy
When we accept his matted rushes
Upheav'd with sylvan fruit; away he bounds, and blushes.

A gift I promise: one I see
Which thou with transport wilt receive,
The only proper gift for thee,
Of which no mortal shall bereave
In later times thy mouldering walls,
Until the last old turret falls;
A crown, a crown from Athens won,
A crown no God can wear, beside Latona's son.

There may be cities who refuse
To their own child the honours due,
And look ungently on the Muse;
But ever shall those cities rue
The dry, unyielding, niggard breast,
Offering no nourishment, no rest,
To that young head which soon shall rise
Disdainfully, in might and glory, to the skies.

Sweetly where cavern'd Dirce flows
Do white-arm'd maidens chaunt my lay,
Flapping the while with laurel-rose
The honey-gathering tribes away;
And sweetly, sweetly Attic tongues
Lisp your Corinna's early songs;
To her with feet more graceful come
The verses that have dwelt in kindred breasts at home.

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O let thy children lean aslant
Against the tender mother's knee,
And gaze into her face, and want
To know what magic there can be
In words that urge some eyes to dance,
While others as in holy trance
Look up to heaven: be such my praise!
Why linger? I must haste, or lose the Delphic bays.

XLV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Epimedea, it appears, has not corrupted very grossly your purity and simplicity in dress. Yet, remembering your observation on armlets, I can not but commend your kindness and sufferance in wearing her emeralds. Your opinion was formerly, that we should be careful not to subdivide our persons. The arm is composed of three parts; no one of them is too long. Now the armlet intersects that portion of it which must be considered as the most beautiful. In my idea of the matter, the sandal alone is susceptible of gems, after the zone has received the richest. The zone is necessary to our vesture, and encompasses the person, in every quarter of the humanized world, in one invariable manner. The hair too is divided by nature in the middle of the head. There is a cousinship between the hair and the flowers; and from this relation the poets have called by the same name the leaves and it. They appear on the head as if they had been seeking one another. Our national dress, very different from the dresses of barbarous nations, is not the invention of the ignorant or the slave; but the sculptor, the painter, and the poet, have studied how best to adorn the most beautiful object of their fancies and contemplations. The Indians, who believe that human pains and sufferings are pleasing to the deity, make incisions in their bodies, and insert into them imperishable colours. They also adorn the ears and noses and foreheads of their gods. These were the ancestors of the Egyptian; we chose handsomer and better-tempered ones for our worship, but retained the same decorations in our sculpture, and to a degree which the sobriety of the Egyptian had reduced and chastened. Hence we retain the only mark of barbarism which dishonours our national dress, the use of ear-rings. If our statues should all be broken by some convulsion of the earth, would it be believed by future ages that, in the country and age of Sophocles, the women tore holes in their ears to let rings into, as the more brutal of peasants do with the snouts of sows!

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XLVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Cleone, I do not know whether I ought to write out for you anything of Mimnermus. What is amatory poetry without its tenderness? and what was ever less tender than his? Take however the verses, such as they are. Whether they make you smile or look grave, without any grace of their own they must bring one forward. Certainly they are his best, which can not be said of every author out of whose rarer works I have added something to your collection.

I wish not Thasos rich in mines,
Nor Naxos girt around with vines,
Nor Crete nor Samos, the abodes
Of those who govern men and gods,
Nor wider Lydia, where the sound
Of tymbrels shakes the thymy ground,
And with white feet and with hoofs cloven
The dedal dance is spun and woven:
Meanwhile each prying younger thing
Is sent for water to the spring,
Under where red Priapus rears
His club amid the junipers.
In this whole world enough for me
Is any spot the gods decree;
Albeit the pious and the wise
Would tarry where, like mulberries,
In the first hour of ripeness fall
The tender creatures one and all.
To take what falls with even mind
Jove wills, and we must be resign'd.

XLVII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

There is less effrontery in those verses of Mimnermus than in most he has written. He is among the many poets who never make us laugh or weep; among the many whom we take into the hand like pretty insects, turn them over, look at them for a moment, and toss them into the grass again. The earth swarms with these; they live their season, and others similar come into life the next.

I have been reading works widely different from theirs; the odes of the lovely Lesbian. I think she has injured the phaleucian verse, by transposing one foot, and throwing it backward. How greatly more noble and more sonorous are those hendecasyllabics commencing the Scolion on Harmodius and Aristogiton, than the very best of hers, which, to my ear, labour and shuffle in their movement. Her genius

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was wonderful, was prodigious. I am neither blind to her beauties nor indifferent to her sufferings. We love for ever those whom we have wept for when we were children: we love them more than even those who have wept for us. Now I have grieved for Sappho, and so have you, Aspasia! we shall not therefore be hard judges of her sentiments or her poetry.

Frequently have we listened to the most absurd and extravagant praises of the answer she gave Alcæus, when he told her he wished to say something, but shame prevented him. This answer of hers is a proof that she was deficient in delicacy and in tenderness. Could Sappho be ignorant how infantinely inarticulate is early love? Could she be ignorant that shame and fear seize it unrelentingly by the throat, while hard-hearted impudence stands at ease, prompt at opportunity, and profuse in declarations!

There is a gloom in deep love, as in deep water: there is a silence in it which suspends the foot, and the folded arms and the dejected head are the images it reflects. No voice shakes its surface: the Muses themselves approach it with a tardy and a timid step, and with a low and tremulous and melancholy song.

The best Ode of Sappho, the Ode to Anactoria,

"Happy as any God is he," &c.,

shows the intemperance and disorder of passion. The description of her malady may be quite correct, but I confess my pleasure ends at the first strophe, where it begins with the generality of readers. I do not desire to know the effects of the distemper on her body, and I run out of the house into the open air, although the symptoms have less in them of contagion than of unseemliness. Both Sophocles and Euripides excite our sympathies more powerfully and more poetically.

I will not interfere any farther with your reflections; and indeed when I began, I intended to remark only the injustice of Sappho's reproof to Alcæus in the first instance, and the justice of it in the second, when he renewed his suit to her after he had fled from battle. We find it in the only epigram attributed to her.

He who from battle runs away
May pray and sing, and sing and pray;
Nathless, Alcæus, howsoe'er
Dulcet his song and warm his prayer
And true his vows of love may be,
He ne'er shall run away with me.

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In my opinion no lover should be dismissed with contumely, or without the expression of commiseration, unless he has committed some bad action. O Aspasia! it is hard to love and not to be loved again. I felt it early; I still feel it. There is a barb beyond the reach of dittany; but years, as they roll by us, benumb in some degree our sense of suffering. Season comes after season, and covers as it were with soil and herbage the flints that have cut us so cruelly in our course.

XLVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Alcæus, often admirable in his poetry, was a vain-glorious and altogether worthless man. I must defend Sappho. She probably knew his character at the beginning, and sported a witticism (not worth much) at his expense. He made a pomp and parade of his generosity and courage, with which in truth he was scantily supplied, and all his love lay commodiously at the point of his pen, among the rest his first.

He was unfit for public life, he was unfit for private. Perverse, insolent, selfish, he hated tyranny because he could not be a tyrant. Sufficiently well-born, he was jealous and intolerant of those who were nothing less so, and he wished they were all poets that he might expose a weakness the more in them. For rarely has there been one, however virtuous, without some vanity and some invidiousness; despiser of the humble, detractor of the high, iconoclast of the near, and idolater of the distant.

Return we to Alcæus. Factitious in tenderness, factitious in heroism, addicted to falsehood, and unabashed at his fondness for it, he attacked and overcame every rival in that quarter. He picked up all the arrows that were shot against him, recocted all the venom of every point, and was almost an Archilochus in satire.

I do not agree with you in your censure of Sappho. There is softness by the side of power, discrimination by the side of passion. In this however I do agree with you, that her finest ode is not to be compared to many choruses in the tragedians. We know that Sappho felt acutely; yet Sappho is never pathetic. Euripides and Sophocles are not remarkable for their purity, the intensity, or the fidelity of their loves, yet they touch, they transfix, the heart. Her imagination, her whole soul, is absorbed in her own breast: *she* is the prey of the passions; *they* are the lords and masters.

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Sappho has been dead so long, and we live so far from Lesbos, that we have the fewer means of ascertaining the truth or falsehood of stories told about her. Some relate that she was beautiful, some that she was deformed. Lust, it is said, is frequently the inhabitant of deformity; and coldness is experienced in the highest beauty. I believe the former case is more general than the latter: but where there is great regularity of features I have often remarked a correspondent regularity in the affections and the conduct.

XLIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Do you remember the lively Hegemon, whose curls you pressed down with your forefinger to see them spring up again? Do you remember his biting it for the liberty you had taken; and his kissing it to make it well; and his telling you that he was not quite sure whether some other kisses, here and there, might not be requisite to prevent the spreading of the venom? And do you remember how you turned pale? and how you laughed with me, as we went away, at his thinking you turned pale because you were afraid of it? The boy of fifteen, as he was then, hath lost all his liveliness, all his assurance, all his wit; and his radiant beauty has taken another character. His cousin Praxinoë, whom he was not aware of loving until she was betrothed to Callias, a merchant of Samos, was married a few months ago. There are no verses I read oftener than the loose dithyrambics of poor Hegemon. Do people love anywhere else as we love here at Miletus? But perhaps the fondness of Hegemon may abate after a time; for Hegemon is not a woman. How long and how assiduous are we in spinning that thread, the softest and finest in the web of life, which Destiny snaps asunder in one moment!

HEGEMON TO PRAXINOE.

Is there any season, O my soul,
When the sources of bitter tears dry up,
And the uprooted flowers take their places again
Along the torrent-bed?

Could I wish to live, it would be for that season,
To repose my limbs and press my temples there.
But should I not speedily start away
In the hope to trace and follow thy steps!

Thou art gone, thou art gone, Praxinoë!
And hast taken far from me thy lovely youth,
Leaving me naught that was desirable in mine.
Alas! alas! what hast thou left me?

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The helplessness of childhood, the solitude of age,
The laughter of the happy, the pity of the scorner,
A colorless and broken shadow am I,
Seen glancing in troubled waters.

My thoughts too are scattered; thou hast cast them off;
They beat against thee, they would cling to thee,
But they are viler than the loose dark weeds,
Without a place to root or rest in.

I would throw them across my lyre; they drop from it;
My lyre will sound only two measures;
That Pity will never, never come,
Or come to the sleep that awakeneth not unto her.

L. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Tell Hegemon that his verses have made a deeper impression than his bite, and that the Athenians, men and women, are pleased with them. He has shown that he is a poet, by not attempting to show that he is overmuch of one. Forbear to inform him that we Athenians disapprove of irregularity in versification: we are little pleased to be rebounded from the end of a line to the beginning, as it often happens, and to be obliged to turn back and make inquiries in regard to what we have been about. There have latterly been many compositions in which it is often requisite to read twice over the verses which have already occupied more than a due portion of our time in reading once. The hop-skip-and-jump is by no means a pleasant or a graceful exercise, but it is quite intolerable when we invert it to a jump-skip-and-hop. I take some liberty in these strange novel compounds, but no greater than our friend Aristophanes has taken, and not only without reproof or censure, but with great commendation for it. However, I have done it for the first and last time, and before the only friend with whom they can be pardonable. Henceforward, I promise you, Cleone, I will always be Attic, or, what is gracefuller and better, Ionian. You shall for ever hear my voice in my letters, and you shall know it to be mine, and mine only. Already I have had imitators in the style of my conversations, but they have imitated others too, and this hath saved me. In mercy and pure beneficence to me, the Gods have marred the resemblance. Nobody can recognise me in my metempsychosis. Those who had hoped and heard better of me, will never ask themselves, "Was Aspasia so wordy, so inelegant, affected, and per-

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verse?" Inconsiderate friends have hurt me worse than enemies could do: they have hinted that the orations of Pericles have been retouched by my pen. Cleone! the Gods themselves could not correct his language. Human ingenuity, with all the malice and impudence that usually accompany it, will never be able to remodel a single sentence, or to substitute a single word, in his speeches to the people. What wealth of wisdom has he not thrown away lest it encumber him in the Agora! how much more than ever was carried into it by the most popular of his opponents! Some of my expressions may have escaped from him in crowded places; some of his cling to me in retirement: we can not love without imitating; and we are as proud in the loss of our originality as of our freedom. I am sorry that poor Hegemon has not had an opportunity of experiencing all this. Persuade his friends never to pity him, truly or feignedly, for pity keeps the wound open: persuade them rather to flatter him on his poetry, for never was there poet to whom the love of praise was not the first and most constant of passions. His friends will be the gainers by it: he will divide among them all the affection he fancies he has reserved for Praxinoë. With most men, nothing seems to have happened so long ago as an affair of love. Let nobody hint this to him at present. It is among the many truths that ought to be held back; it is among the many that excite a violent opposition at one time, and obtain at another (not much later) a very ductile acquiescencé; he will receive it hereafter (take my word for him) with only one slight remonstrance . . *you are too hard upon us lovers:* then follows a shake of the head, not of abnegation, but of sanction, like Jupiter's.

Praxinoë, it seems, is married to a merchant, poor girl! I do not like these merchants. Let them have wealth in the highest, but not beauty in the highest; cunning and calculation can hardly merit both. At last they may aspire, if any civilized country could tolerate it, to honours and distinctions. These too let them have, but at Tyre and Carthage.

LI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

How many things in poetry, as in other matters, are likely to be lost because they are small! Cleobuline of Lindos wrote no long poem. Her lover was Cycnus of Colophon. There is not a single verse of hers in all that city; proof enough that he took no particular

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care of them. At Miletus she was quite unknown, not indeed by name, but in her works, until the present month, when a copy of them was offered to me for sale. The first that caught my eyes was this:

Where is the swan of breast so white
It made my bubbling life run bright
On that one spot, and that alone,
On which he rested; and I stood
Gazing: now swells the turbid flood;
Summer and he for other climes are flown!

I will not ask you at present to say anything in praise of Cleobuline, but do be grateful to Myrtis and Corinna!

LII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Grateful I am, and shall for ever be, to Myrtis and Corinna. But what odour of bud or incense can they wish to be lavished on the empty sepulchre, what praises of the thousand who praise in ignorance, or of the learned who praise from tradition, when they remember that they subdued and regulated the proud unruly Pindar, and agitated with all their passion the calm pure breast of Cleone!

Send me the whole volume of Cleobuline; transcribe nothing more. To compensate you as well as I can, and indeed I think the compensation is not altogether an unfair one, here are two little pieces from Myrtis, autographs, from the library of Pericles.

Artemia, while Arion sighs,
Raising her white and taper finger,
Pretends to loose, yet makes to linger,
The ivy that o'ershades her eyes.

"Wait, or you shall not have the kiss,"
Says she; but he, on wing to pleasure,
"Are there not other hours for leisure?
For love is any hour like this?"

Artemia! faintly thou respondest,
As falsely deems that fiery youth;
A God there is who knows the truth,
A God who tells me which is fondest.

Here is another, in the same hand, a clear and elegant one. Men may be negligent in their hand-writing, for men may be in a hurry about the business of life; but I never knew either a sensible woman or an estimable one whose writing was disorderly.

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Well, the verses are prettier than my reflection, and equally true.

I will not love!
. . . These sounds have often
Burst from a troubled breast;
Rarely from one no sighs could soften,
Rarely from one at rest.

Myrtis and Corinna, like Anacreon and Sappho who preceded them, were temperate in the luxuries of poetry. They had enough to do with one feeling; they were occupied enough with one reflection. They culled but few grapes from the bunch, and never dragged it across the teeth, stripping off ripe and unripe.

LIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

The verses of Myrtis, which you sent me last, are somewhat less pleasing to me than those others of hers which I send you in return. A few loose ideas on the subject (I know not whether worth writing) occur to me at this moment. Formerly we were contented with schools of philosophy; we now begin to talk about schools of poetry. Is not that absurd? There is only one school, the universe; one only school-mistress, Nature. Those who are reported to be of such or such a school, are of none; they have played the truant. Some are more careful, some more negligent, some bring many dishes, some fewer, some little seasoned, some highly. Ground however there is for the fanciful appellation. The young poets at Miletus are beginning to throw off their allegiance to the established and acknowledged laws of Athens, and are weary of following in the train of the graver who have been crowned. The various schools, as they call them, have assumed distinct titles; but the largest and most flourishing of all would be discontented, I am afraid, with the properest I could inscribe it with, the *queer*. We really have at present in our city more good poets than we ever had; and the *queer* might be among the best if they pleased. But whenever an obvious and natural thought presents itself, they either reject it for coming without imagination, or they *phrygianize* it with such biting and hot curling-irons, that it rolls itself up impenetrably. They declare to us that pure and simple imagination is the absolute perfection of poetry; and if ever they admit a sentence or reflection, it must be one which requires a whole day to unravel and wind it smoothly on the distaff.

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To me it appears that poetry ought neither to be all body nor all soul. Beautiful features, limbs compact, sweetness of voice, and easiness of transition, belong to the Deity who inspires and represents it. We may loiter by the stream and allay our thirst as it runs, but we should not be forbidden the larger draught from the deeper well.

FROM MYRTIS.

Friends, whom she look'd at blandly from her couch
And her white wrist above it, gem-bedewed,
Were arguing with Pentheusa: she had heard
Report of Creon's death, whom years before
She listened to, well-pleas'd; and sighs arose;
For sighs full often fondle with reproofs
And will be fondled by them. When I came
After the rest to visit her, she said,
"Myrtis! how kind! Who better knows than thou
The pangs of love? and my first love was he!"
Tell me (if ever, Eros! are reveal'd
Thy secrets to the earth) have they been true
To any love who speak about the first?
What! shall these holier lights, like twinkling stars
In the few hours assign'd them, change their place,
And, when comes ampler splendour, disappear?
Idler I am, and pardon, not reply,
Implore from thee, thus questioned; well I know
Thou strikest, like Olympian Jove, but once.

LIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Lysicles, a young Athenian, fond of travelling, has just returned to us from a voyage in Thrace. A love of observation, in other words curiosity, could have been his only motive, for he never was addicted to commerce, nor disciplined in philosophy; and indeed were he so, Thrace is hardly the country he would have chosen. I believe he is the first that ever travelled with no other intention than to see the cities and know the manners of barbarians. He represents the soil as extremely fertile in its nature, and equally well cultivated, and the inhabitants as warlike, hospitable, and courteous. All this is credible enough, and perhaps as generally known as might be expected of regions so remote and perilous. But Lysicles will appear to you to have assumed a little more than the fair privileges of a traveller, in relating that the people have so imperfect a sense of religion as to bury the dead in the temples of the Gods, and the priests are so avaricious and shameless as to claim money for the permission of this

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impiety. He told us furthermore that he had seen a magnificent temple, built on somewhat of a Grecian model, in the interior of which there are many flat marbles fastened with iron cramps against the walls, and serving for monuments. Continuing his discourse, he assured us that these monuments, although none are ancient, are of all forms and dimensions, as if the Thracians were resolved to waste and abolish the symmetry they had adopted; and that they are inscribed in an obsolete language, so that the people whom they might animate and instruct, by recording brave and virtuous actions, pass them carelessly by, breaking off now and then a nose from a conqueror, and a wing from an agathodemon.

Thrace is governed by many princes. One of them, Teres, an Odrysan,* has gained great advantages in war. No doubt, this is uninteresting to you, but it is necessary to the course of my narration. Will you believe it? yet Lysicles is both intelligent and trustworthy . . will you believe that, at the return of the Thracian prince to enjoy the fruits of his victory, he ordered an architect to build an arch for himself and his army to pass under, on their road into the city? As if a road, on such an occasion, ought not rather to be widened than narrowed! If you will not credit this of a barbarian, who is reported to be an intelligent and prudent man in other things, you will exclaim, I fear, against the exaggeration of Lysicles and my credulity, when I relate to you on his authority that, to the same conqueror, by his command, there has been erected a column sixty cubits high, supporting his effigy in marble!

Imagine the general of an army standing upon a column of sixty cubits to show himself! A crane might do it after a victory over a pigmy; or it might aptly represent the virtues of a rope-dancer, exhibiting how little he was subject to dizziness.

I will write no more about it, for really I am beginning to think that some pretty Thracian has given poor Lysicles a love-potion, and that it has affected his brain.

LV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Never will I believe that a people, however otherwise ignorant and barbarous, yet capable of turning a regular arch and of erecting a

* Teres not only governed the larger part of Thrace, but influenced many of the free and independent states in that country, and led into the field the Getes, the Agrianians, the Lœans, and the Pœonians. Sitalces, son of Teres, ravaged all Macedonia in the reign of Perdiccas.

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lofty column, can be so stupid and absurd as you have represented. What! bury dead bodies in the temples! cast them out of their own houses into the houses of the Gods! Depend upon it, Aspasia, they were the bones of victims; and the strange uncouth inscriptions commemorate votive offerings, in the language of the priests, whatever it may be. So far is clear. Regarding the arch, Lysicles saw them removing it, and fancied they were building it. This mistake is really ludicrous. The column, you must have perceived at once, was erected, not to display the victor, but to expose the vanquished. A blunder very easy for an idle traveller to commit. Few of the Thracians, I conceive, even in the interior, are so utterly ignorant of Grecian arts, as to raise a statue at such a highth above the ground that the vision shall not comprehend all the features easily, and the spectator see and contemplate the object of his admiration, as nearly and in the same position as he was used to do in the Agora.

The monument of the greatest man should be only a bust and a name. If the name alone is insufficient to illustrate the bust, let them both perish.

Enough about Thracians; enough about tombs and monuments. Two pretty Milesians, Agapentha and Peristera, who are in love with you for loving me, are quite resolved to kiss your hand. You must not detain them long with you: Miletus is not to send all her beauty to be kept at Athens: we have no such treaty.

LVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

There is such a concourse of philosophers, all anxious to show Alcibiades the road to Virtue, that I am afraid they will completely block it up before him. Among the rest is my old friend Socrates, who seems resolved to transfer to him all the philosophy he designed for me, with very little of that which I presented to him in return.

And Alcibiades, who began with ridiculing him, now attends to him with as much fondness as Hyacinthus did to Apollo. The graver and uglier philosophers, however they differ on other points, agree in these; that beauty does not reside in the body, but in the mind; that philosophers are the only true heroes; and that heroes alone are entitled to the privilege of being implicitly obeyed by the beautiful.

Doubtless there may be very fine pearls in very uninviting shells; but our philosophers never wade knee-deep into the beds, attracted rather to what is bright externally.

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LVII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Alcibiades ought not to have captious or inquisitive men about him. I know not what the sophists are good for; I only know they are the very worst instructors. Logic, however unperverted, is not for boys; argumentation is among the most dangerous of early practices, and sends away both fancy and modesty. The young mind should be nourished with simple and grateful food, and not too copious. It should be little exercised until its nerves and muscles show themselves, and even then rather for air than anything else. Study is the bane of boyhood, the aliment of youth, the indulgence of manhood, and the restorative of age.

I am confident that persons like you and Pericles see little of these sharpers who play tricks upon words. It is amusing to observe how they do it, once or twice. As there are some flowers which you should smell but slightly to extract all that is pleasant in them, and which, if you do otherwise, emit what is unpleasant or noxious, so there are some men with whom a slight acquaintance is quite sufficient to draw out all that is agreeable; a more intimate one would be unsatisfactory and unsafe.

LVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Pericles rarely says he likes anything; but whenever he is pleased, he expresses it by his countenance, although when he is displeased he never shows it, even by the faintest sign. It was long before I ventured to make the observation to him: he replied,

"It would be ungrateful and ungentle not to return my thanks for any pleasure imparted to me, when a smile has the power of conveying them. I never say that a thing pleases me while it is yet undone or absent, lest I should give somebody the trouble of performing or producing it. As for what is displeasing, I really am insensible in general to matters of this nature; and when I am not so, I experience more of satisfaction in subduing my feeling than I ever felt of displeasure at the occurrence which excited it. Politeness is in itself a power, and takes away the weight and galling from every other we may exercise. I foresee," he added, "that Alcibiades will be an elegant man, but I apprehend he will never be a polite one. There is a difference, and a greater than we are apt to perceive or imagine. Alcibiades would win without conciliating: he would seize

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and hold, but would not acquire. The man who is determined to keep others fast and firm, must have one end of the bond about his own breast, sleeping and waking."

LIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Agapenthe and Peristera, the bearers of your letter, came hither in safety and health, late as the season is for navigation. They complain of our cold climate in Athens, and shudder at the sight of snow upon the mountains in the horizon.

Hardly had they been seen with me, before the housewives and sages were indignant at their effrontery. In fact, they gazed in wonder at the ugliness of our sex in Attica, and at the gravity of philosophers, of whom stories so ludicrous are related. I do not think I shall be able to find them lovers here. Peristera hath lost a little of her dove-like faculty (if ever she had much) at the report which has been raised about her cousin and herself. Dracontides was smitten at first sight by Agapenthe; she however was not at all by him, which is usually the case when young men would warm us at their fire before ours is kindled. For, honestly to confess the truth, the best of us are more capricious than sensitive, and more sensitive than grateful. Dracontides is not indeed a man to excite so delightful a feeling. He is confident that Peristera must be the cause of Agapenthe's disinclination to him; for how is it possible that a young girl of unperverted mind could be indifferent to Dracontides? Unable to discover that any sorceress was employed against him, he turned his anger toward Peristera, and declared in her presence that her malignity alone could influence so abusively the generous mind of Agapenthe. At my request the playful girl consented to receive him. Seated upon an amphora in the aviary, she was stroking the neck of a noble peacock, while the bird pecked at the berries on a branch of arbutus in her bosom. Dracontides entered, conducted by Peristera, who desired her cousin to declare at once whether it was by any malignity of hers that he had hitherto failed to conciliate her regard.

"O the ill-tempered frightful man!" cried Agapenthe; "does anybody that is not malicious ever talk of malignity?"

Dracontides went away, calling upon the Gods for justice.

The next morning a rumour ran through Athens, how he had broken off his intended nuptials, on the discovery that Aspasia had

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destined the two Ionians to the pleasures of Pericles. Moreover, he had discovered that one of them, he would not say which, had certainly threads of several colours in her threadcase, not to mention a lock of hair, whether of a dead man, or no, might by some be doubted; and that the other was about to be consigned to Pyrilampes, in exchange for a peacock and sundry smaller birds.

No question could be entertained of the fact, for the girls were actually in the house, and the birds in the aviary.

Agapenthe declares she waits only for the spring, and will then leave Athens for her dear Miletus, where she never heard such an expression as malignity.

"O what rude people the Athenians are!" said she.

LX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Rather than open my letter again, I write another.

Agapenthe's heart is won by Mnasylos: I never suspected it.

On his return out of Thessaly (whither I fancy he went on purpose) he brought a cage of nightingales. There are few of them in Attica; and none being kept tame, none remain with us through the winter. Of the four brought by Mnasylos, one sings even in this season of the year. Agapenthe and Peristera were awakened in the morning by the song of a bird like a nightingale in the aviary. They went down together; and over the door they found these verses:—

Maiden or youth, who standest here,
Think not, if haply we should fear
A stranger's voice or stranger's face,
(Such is the nature of our race)
That we would gladly fly again
To gloomy wood or windy plain.
Certain we are we ne'er should find
A care so provident, so kind,
Altho' by flight we repossest
The tenderest mother's warmest nest.
O may you prove, as well as we,
That even in Athens there may be
A sweeter thing than liberty.

"This is surely the hand-writing of Mnasylos," said Agapenthe.

"How do you know his hand-writing?" cried Peristera.

A blush and a kiss, and one gentle push, were the answer.

Mnasylos, on hearing the sound of footsteps, had retreated behind

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a thicket of laurustine and pyracanthus, in which the aviary is situated, fearful of bringing the gardener into reproof for admitting him. However, his passion was uncontrollable; and Peristera declares, although Agapenthe denies it, that he caught a kiss upon each of his cheeks by the interruption. Certain it is, for they agree in it, that he threw his arms around them both as they were embracing, and implored them to conceal the fault of poor old Alcon, "who showed me," said he, "more pity than Agapenthe will ever show me."

"Why did you bring these birds hither?" said she, trying to frown.

"Because you asked," replied he, "the other day, whether we had any in Attica, and told me you had many at home."

She turned away abruptly, and, running up to my chamber, would have informed me why.

Superfluous confidence! Her tears wetted my cheek.

"Agapenthe!" said I, smiling, "are you sure you have cried for the last time, 'O what rude people the Athenians are!'"

LXI. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

I apprehend, O Pericles, not only that I may become an object of jealousy and hatred to the Athenians, by the notice you have taken of me, but that you yourself, which affects me greatly more, may cease to retain the whole of their respect and veneration.

Whether, to acquire a great authority over the people, some things are not necessary to be done on which Virtue and Wisdom are at variance, it becomes not me to argue or consider; but let me suggest the inquiry to you, whether he who is desirous of supremacy should devote the larger portion of his time to one person.

Three affections of the soul predominate; Love, Religion, and Power. The first two are often united; the other stands widely apart from them, and neither is admitted nor seeks admittance to their society. I wonder then how you can love so truly and tenderly. Ought I not rather to say I *did* wonder? Was Pisistratus affectionate? Do not be angry. It is certainly the first time a friend has ever ventured to discover a resemblance, although you are habituated to it from your opponents. In these you forgive it; do you in me?

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LXII. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Pisistratus was affectionate: the rest of his character you know as well as I do. You know that he was eloquent, that he was humane, that he was contemplative, that he was learned; that he not only was profuse to men of genius, but cordial, and that it was only with such men he was familiar and intimate. You know that he was the greatest, the wisest, the most virtuous, excepting Solon and Lycurgus, that ever ruled any portion of the human race. Is it not happy and glorious for mortals, when, instead of being led by the ears under the clumsy and violent hand of vulgar and clamorous adventurers, a Pisistratus leaves the volumes of Homer and the conversation of Solon, for them?

We may be introduced to Power by Humanity, and at first may love her less for her own sake than for Humanity's, but by degrees we become so accustomed to her as to be quite uneasy without her.

Religion and Power, like the Cariatides in sculpture, never face one another; they sometimes look the same way, but oftener stand back to back.

We will argue about them one at a time, and about the other in the triad too: let me have the choice.

LXIII. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

We must talk over again the subject of your letter; no, not talk, but write about it.

I think, Pericles, you who are so sincere with me, are never quite sincere with others. You have contracted this bad habitude from your custom of addressing the people. But among friends and philosophers, would it not be better to speak exactly as we think, whether ingeniously or not? Ingenious things, I am afraid, are never perfectly true: however, I would not exclude them, the difference being wide between perfect truth and violated truth; I would not even leave them in a minority; I would hear and say as many as may be, letting them pass current for what they are worth. Anaxagoras rightly remarked that Love always makes us better, Religion sometimes, Power never.

LXIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Pericles was delighted with your letter on education. I wish he were as pious as you are; occasionally he appears so. I attacked

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him on his simulation, but it produced a sudden and powerful effect on Alcibiades. You will collect the whole from a summary of our conversation.

"So true," said he, "is the remark of Anaxagoras, that it was worth my while to controvert it. Did you not observe the attention paid to it by young and old? I was unwilling that the graver part of the company should argue to-morrow with Alcibiades on the nature of love, as they are apt to do, and should persuade him that he would be the better for it.

"On this consideration I said, while you were occupied, 'O Anaxagoras! if we of this household knew not how religious a man you are, your discourse would in some degree lead us to countenance the suspicion of your enemies. Religion is never too little for us; it satisfies all the desires of the soul. Love is but an atom of it, consuming and consumed by the stubble on which it falls. But when it rests upon the Gods, it partakes of their nature, in its essence pure and eternal. Like the ocean, Love embraces the earth; and by Love, as by the ocean, whatever is sordid and unsound is borne away.'

"'Love indeed works great marvels,' said Anaxagoras, 'but I doubt whether the ocean, in such removals, may not peradventure be the more active of the two.'

"'Acknowledge at least,' said I, 'that the flame of Love purifies the temple it burns in.'

"'Only when first lighted,' said Anaxagoras. 'Generally the heat is either spent or stifling soon afterward; and the torch, when it is extinguished, leaves an odour very different from myrrh and frankincense.'

"I think, Aspasia, you entered while he was speaking these words."

He had turned the stream. Pericles then proceeded.

"Something of power," said he, "hath been consigned to me by the favour and indulgence of the Athenians. I do not dissemble that I was anxious to obtain it; I do not dissemble that my vows and supplications for the prosperity of the country were unremitted. It pleased the Gods to turn toward me the eyes of my fellow-citizens, but had they not blessed me with religion they never would have blessed me with power, better and more truly called an influence on their hearts and their reason, a high and secure place in the acropolis

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of their affections. Yes, Anaxagoras! yes, Meton! I do say, had they not *blessed* me with it; for, in order to obtain it, I was obliged to place a daily and a nightly watch over my thoughts and actions. In proportion as authority was consigned to me, I found it both expedient and easy to grow better, time not being left me for sedentary occupations or frivolous pursuits, and every desire being drawn on and absorbed in that mighty and interminable, that rushing, renovating, and purifying one, which comprehends our country. If any young man would win to himself the hearts of the wise and brave, and is ambitious of being the guide and leader of them, let him be assured that his virtue will give him power, and power will consolidate and maintain his virtue. Let him never then squander away the inestimable hours of youth in tangled and trifling disquisitions, with such as perhaps have an interest in perverting or unsettling his opinions, and who speculate into his sleeping thoughts and dandle his nascent passions. But let him start from them with alacrity, and walk forth with firmness; let him early take an interest in the business and concerns of men; and let him, as he goes along, look steadfastly at the images of those who have benefited his country, and make with himself a solemn compact to stand hereafter among them."

I had heard the greater part of this already, all but the commencement. At the conclusion Alcibiades left the room; I feared he was conscious that something in it was too closely applicable to him. How I rejoiced when I saw him enter again, with a helmet like Pallas's on his head, a spear in his hand, crying, "To Sparta, boys! to Sparta!"

Pericles whispered to me, but in a voice audible to those who sate farther off, "Alcibiades, I trust, is destined to abolish the influence and subvert the power of that restless and troublesome rival."

LXV. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

I disbelieve, O Pericles, that it is good for us, that it is good for men, women, or nations, to be without a rival.

Acquit me now of any desire that, in your generosity, you should resolve on presenting me with such a treasure, for I am without the ability of returning it. But have you never observed how many graces of person and demeanour we women are anxious to display,

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in order to humble a rival, which we were unconscious of possessing until opposite charms provoked them?

Sparta can only be humbled by the prosperity and liberality of Athens. She was ever jealous and selfish; Athens has been too often so. It is only by forbearance toward dependent states, and by kindness toward the weaker, that her power can long preponderate. Strong attachments are strong allies. This truth is so clear as to be colourless, and I should fear that you would censure me for writing what almost a child might have spoken, were I ignorant that its importance hath made little impression on the breasts of statesmen.

I admire your wisdom in resolving to increase no farther the domains of Attica; to surround her with the outworks of islands, and more closely with small independent communities. It is only from such as these that Virtue can come forward neither hurt nor heated; the crowd is too dense for her in larger. But what is mostly our consideration, it is only such as these that are sensible of benefits. They cling to you afflictedly in your danger; the greater look on with folded arms, nod knowingly, cry *sad work!* when you are worsted, and turn their backs on you when you are fallen.

LXVI. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

There are things, Aspasia, beyond the art of Phidias. He may represent Love leaning upon his bow and listening to Philosophy; but not for hours together: he may represent Love, while he is giving her a kiss for her lesson, tying her arms behind her: loosing them again must be upon another marble.

LXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The philosophers are less talkative in our conversations, now Alcibiades hath given up his mind to mathematics and strategy, and seldom comes among them.

Pericles told me they will not pour out the rose-water for their beards, unless into a Corinthian or golden vase.

"But take care," added he, "to offend no philosopher of any sect whatever. Indeed to offend any person is the next foolish thing to being offended. I never do it, unless when it is requisite to discredit somebody who might otherwise have the influence to diminish my estimation. Politeness is not always a sign of wisdom; but the

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want of it always leaves room for a suspicion of folly, if folly and imprudence are the same. I have scarcely had time to think of any blessings that entered my house with you, beyond those which encompass myself; yet it can not but be obvious that Alcibiades hath now an opportunity of improving his manners, such as even the society of scholastic men will never countervail. This is a high advantage on all occasions, particularly in embassies. Well-bred men require it, and let it pass: the ill-bred catch at it greedily; as fishes are attracted from the mud, and netted, by the shine of flowers and shells."

LXVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

At last I have heard him speak in public.

Apollo may shake the rocks of Delphi, and may turn the pious pale; my Pericles rises with serenity; his voice hath at once left his lips and entered the heart of Athens. The violent and desperate tremble in every hostile city; a thunderbolt seems to have split in the centre, and to have scattered its sacred fire unto the whole circumference of Greece.

The greatest of prodigies are the prodigies of a mortal; they are indeed the only ones: with the Gods there are none.

Alas! alas! the eloquence and the wisdom, the courage and the constancy of my Pericles, must have their end: and the glorious shrine, wherein they stand pre-eminent, must one day drop into the deformity of death!

O Aspasia! of the tears thou art shedding, tears of pride, tears of fondness, are there none (in those many) for thyself? Yes; whatever was attributed to thee of grace or beauty, so valuable for his sake whose partiality assigned them to thee, must go first, and all that he loses is a loss to thee! Weep then on.

LXIX. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Do you love me? do you love me? Stay, reason upon it, sweet Aspasia! doubt, hesitate, question, drop it, take it up again, provide, raise obstacles, reply indirectly. Oracles are sacred, and there is a pride in being a diviner.

LXX. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

I will do none of those things you tell me to do; but I will say something you forgot to say, about the insufficiency of Phidias.

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He may represent a hero with unbent brows, a sage with the lyre of Poetry in his hand, Ambition with her face half-averted from the City, but he cannot represent, in the same sculpture, at the same distance, Aphrodite higher than Pallas. He would be derided if he did; and a great man can never do that for which a little man may deride him.

I shall love you even more than I do, if you will love yourself more than me. Did ever lover talk so? Pray tell me, for I have forgotten all they ever talked about. But, Pericles! Pericles! be careful to lose nothing of your glory, or you lose all that can be lost of me; my pride, my happiness, my content; everything but my poor weak love. Keep glory then for my sake!

LXXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I am not quite certain that you are correct in your decision, on the propriety of sculpturing the statues of our deities from one sole material. Those however of mortals and nymphs and genii should be marble, and marble only. But you will pardon a doubt, a long doubt, a doubt for the chin to rest upon in the palm of the hand, when Cleone thinks one thing and Phidias another. I debated with Pericles on the subject.

"In my opinion," said he, "no material for statuary is so beautiful as marble; and, far from allowing that two or more materials should compose one statue, I would not willingly see an interruption made in the figure of a god or goddess, even by the folds of drapery. I would venture to take the cestus from Venus, distinguishing her merely by her own peculiar beauty. But in the representations of the more awful Powers, who are to be venerated and worshipped as the patrons and protectors of cities, we must take into account the notions of the people. In their estimate, gold and ivory give splendour and dignity to the Gods themselves, and our wealth displays their power! Beside . . but bring your ear closer . . when they will not indulge us with their favour, we may borrow their cloaks and ornaments, and restore them when they have recovered their temper."

LXXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

After I had written to you, we renewed our conversation on the same subject. I inquired of Pericles whether he thought the appel-

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lation of *golden* was applied to Venus for her precious gifts, or for some other reason. His answer was:

"Small statues of Venus are more numerous than of any other deity; and the first that were gilt in Greece, I believe, were hers. She is worshipped, you know, not only as the goddess of beauty, but likewise as the goddess of fortune. In the former capacity we are her rapturous adorers for five years perhaps; in the latter we persevere for life. Many carry her image with them on their journeys, and there is scarcely a house in any part of Greece wherein it is not a principal ornament."

I remarked to him that Apollo, from the colour of his hair and the radiance of his countenance, would be more appropriately represented in gold, and yet that the poets were unmindful to call him the *golden*.

"They never found him so," said he; "but Venus often smiles upon them in one department. Little images of her are often of solid gold, and are placed on the breast or under the pillow. Other deities are seldom of such diminutive size or such precious materials. It is only of late that they have even borne the semblance of them. The Egyptians, the inventors of all durable colours, and indeed of everything else that is durable in the arts, devised the means of investing other metals with dissolved gold; the Phœnicians, barbarous and indifferent to elegance and refinement, could only cover them with lamular incrustations. By improving the inventions of Egypt, bronze, odious in its own proper colour for the human figure, and more odious for Divinities, assumes a splendour and majesty which almost compensate for marble itself."

"Metal," said I, "has the advantage in durability."

"Surely not," answered he; "and it is more exposed to invasion and avarice. But either of them, under cover, may endure many thousand years, I apprehend, and without corrosion. The temples of Egypt, which have remained two thousand, are fresh at this hour as when they were first erected; and all the violence of Cambyses and his army, bent on effacing the images, has done little more harm, if you look at them from a short distance, than a single fly would do in a summer day, on a statue of Pentelican marble. The Egyptians have laboured more to commemorate the weaknesses of man than the Grecians to attest his energies. This however must be conceded to the Egyptians; that they are the only people on earth to whom

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destruction has not been the first love and principal occupation. The works of their hands will outlive the works of their intellect: here at least I glory in the sure hope that we shall differ from them. Judgment and perception of the true and beautiful will never allow our statuaries to represent the human countenance, as they have done, in granite, and porphyry, and basalt. Their statues have resisted Time and War; ours will vanquish Envy and Malice.

"Sculpture has made great advances in my time; Painting still greater: for until the last forty years it was inelegant and rude. Sculpture can go no farther; Painting can: she may add scenery and climate to her forms. She may give to Philoctetes, not only the wing of the sea-bird wherewith he cools the throbbing of his wound; not only the bow and the quiver at his feet, but likewise the gloomy rocks, the Vulcanian vaults, and the distant fires of Lemnos, the fierce inhabitants subdued by pity, the remorseless betrayer, and the various emotions of his retiring friends. Her reign is boundless, but the fairer and the richer part of her dominions lies within the Odyssea. Painting by degrees will perceive her advantages over Sculpture; but if there are paces between Sculpture and Painting, there are parasangs between Painting and Poetry. The difference is that of a lake confined by mountains, and a river running on through all the varieties of scenery, perpetual and unimpeded. Sculpture and Painting are moments of life; Poetry is life itself, and everything around it and above it.

"But let us turn back again to the position we set out from, and offer due reverence to the truest diviners of the Gods. Phidias in ten days is capable of producing what would outlive ten thousand years, if man were not resolved to be the subverter of man's glory. The Gods themselves will vanish away before their images."

O Cleone! this is painful to hear. I wish Pericles, and I too, were somewhat more religious: it is so sweet and graceful.

LXXIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

She, O Aspasia, who wishes to be more religious, hath much religion, although the volatility of her imagination and the velocity of her pursuits do not permit her to settle fixedly on the object of it. How could I have ever loved you so, if I believed the Gods would disapprove of my attachment, as they certainly would if you underrated their power and goodness! They take especial care both

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to punish the unbeliever, and to strike with awe the witnesses of unbelief. I accompanied my father, not long since, to the temple of Apollo; and when we had performed the usual rites of our devotion, there came up to us a young man of somewhat pleasing aspect, with whose family ours was anciently on terms of intimacy. After my father had made the customary inquiries, he conversed with us about his travels. He had just left Ephesus, and said he had spent the morning in a comparison between Diana's temple and Apollo's. He told us that they are similar in design; but that the Ephesian Goddess is an ugly lump of dark-coloured stone; while our Apollo is of such transcendent beauty that, on first beholding him, he wondered any other God had a worshipper. My father was transported with joy at such a declaration.

"Give up the others," said he; "worship here, and rely on prosperity."

"Were I myself to select," answered he, "any deity in preference to the rest, it should not be an irascible, or vindictive, or unjust one."

"Surely not," cried my father . . "it should be Apollo; and *our* Apollo! What has Diana done for any man, or any woman? I speak submissively . . with all reverence . . I do not question."

The young man answered, "I will forbear to say a word about Diana, having been educated in great fear of her: but surely the treatment of Marsyas by Apollo was bordering on severity."

"Not a whit," cried my father, "if understood rightly."

"His assent to the request of Phaëton," continued the young man, "knowing (as he did) the consequences, seems a little deficient in that foresight which belongs peculiarly to the God of prophecy."

My father left me abruptly, ran to the font, and sprinkled first himself, then me, lastly the guest, with lustral water.

"We mortals," continued he gravely, "should not presume to argue on the Gods after our own inferior nature and limited capacities. What appears to have been cruel might have been most kindly provident."

"The reasoning is conclusive," said the youth; "you have caught by the hand a benighted and wandering dreamer, and led him from the brink of a precipice. I see nothing left now on the road-side but the skin of Marsyas, and it would be folly to start or flinch at it."

My father had a slight suspicion of his sincerity, and did not invite him to the house. He has attempted to come, more than

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once, evidently with an earnest desire to explore the truth. Several days together he has been seen on the very spot where he made the confession to my father, in deep thought, and, as we hope, under the influence of the Deity.

I forgot to tell you that this young person is Thraseas, son of Phormio, the Coan.

LXXIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

If ever there was a youth whose devotion was ardent, and whose face (I venture to say, although I never saw it) was prefigured for the offices of adoration, I suspect it must be Thraseas, son of Phormio, the Coan.

Happy the man who, when every thought else is dismissed, comes last and alone into the warm and secret foldings of a letter!

LXXV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Alcibiades entered the library one day when I was writing out some verses. He discovered what I was about, by my hurry in attempting to conceal them.

"Alcibiades!" said I, "we do not like to be detected in anything so wicked as poetry. Some day or other I shall perhaps have my revenge, and catch you committing the same sin with more pertinacity."

"Do you fancy," said he, "that I can not write a verse or two, if I set my heart upon it?"

"No," replied I, "but I doubt whether your heart, in its lightness and volubility, would not roll off so slippery a plinth. We remember your poetical talents, displayed in all their brightness on poor Socrates."

"Do not laugh at Socrates," said he. "The man is by no means such a quibbler and impostor as some of his disciples would represent him, making him drag along no easy mule-load, by Hercules! no summer robe, no every-day vesture, no nurse of an after-dinner nap, but a trailing, troublesome, intricate piece of sophistry, interwoven with flowers and sphynxes, stolen from an Egyptian temple, with dust enough in it to blind all the crocodiles as far as to the cataracts, and to dry up the Nile at its highest overflow. He is rather fond of strangling an unwary interloper with a string of questions, of which it is difficult to see the length or the knots, until the two ends are

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about the throat; but he lets him off easily when he has fairly set his mark on him. Anaxagoras tells me that there is not a school in Athens where the scholars are so jealous and malicious, while he himself is totally exempt from those worst and most unphilosophical of passions; that the parasitical weed grew up together with their very root, and soon overtopped the plant, but that it only hangs to his railing. Now Anaxagoras envies nobody, and only perplexes us by the admiration of his generosity, modesty, and wisdom.

"I did not come hither to disturb you, Aspasia! and will retire when I have given you satisfaction, or *revenge*; this, I think, is the word. Not only have I written verses, and, as you may well suppose, long after those upon the son of Sophroniscos, but verses upon love."

"Are we none of us in the secret?" said I.

"You shall be," said he; "attend and pity."

I must have turned pale, I think, for I shuddered. He repeated these, and relieved me.

I love to look on lovely eyes,
And do not shun the sound of sighs,
If they are level with the ear;
But if they rise just o'er my chin,
O Venus! how I hate their din!
My own I am too weak to bear.

LXXVI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Do you remember little Artemidora, the mild and bashful girl, whom you compared to a white blossom on the river, surrounded by innumerable slender reeds, and seen only at intervals as they waved about her, making way to the breeze, and quivering and bending? Not having seen her for some time, and meeting Deiphobos who is intimate with her family, I ventured to ask him whether he had been lately at the house. He turned pale. Imprudent and indelicate as I am, I accused him instantly, with much gaiety, of love for her. Accused! O Aspasia, how glorious is it in one to feel more sensibly than all others the beauty that lies far beyond what they ever can discern! From their earthly station they behold the Sun's bright disk: *he* enters the palace of the God. Externally there is fire only: pure inextinguishable æther fills the whole space within, and increases the beauty it displays.

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"Cleone!" said he, "you are distressed at the apprehension of having pained me. Believe me, you have not touched the part where pain lies. Were it possible that a creature so perfect could love me, I would reprove her indiscretion; I would recall to her attention what surely her eyes might indicate at a glance, the disparity of our ages; and I would teach her, what is better taught by friendship than by experience, that youth alone is the fair price of youth. However, since there is on either side nothing but pure amity, there is no necessity for any such discourse. My soul could hardly be more troubled if there were. Her health is declining while her beauty is scarcely yet at its meridian. I will not delay you, O Cleone! nor will you delay me. Rarely do I enter the temples; but I must enter here before I sleep. Artemis and Aphroditè may perhaps hear me: but I entreat you, do you also, who are more pious than I am, pray and implore of their divine goodness, that my few years may be added to hers; the few to the many, the sorrowful (not then so) to the joyous."

He clasped my hand: I withdrew it, for it burnt me. Inconsiderate and indelicate before, call me now (what you must ever think me) barbarous and inhuman.

LXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The largest heart, O Cleone, is that which only one can rest upon or impress; the purest is that which dares to call itself impure; the kindest is that which shrinks rather at its own inhumanity than at another's. Cleone barbarous! Cleone inhuman! Silly girl! you are fit only to be an instructress to the sillier Aspasia. In some things (in this for instance) I am wiser than you. I have truly a great mind to make you blush again, and so make you accuse yourself a second time of indiscretion. After a pause, I am resolved on it. Now then. Artemidora is the very girl who preferred you to me both for manners and beauty. Many have done the same, no doubt, but she alone to my face. When we were sitting, one evening in autumn, with our feet in the Mæander, her nurse conducted her toward us. We invited her to sit down between us, which at first she was afraid of doing, because the herbage had recovered from the drought of summer and had become succulent as in spring, so that it might stain her short white dress. But when we showed her how this danger might be quite avoided, she blushed, and, after some hesitation, was

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seated. Before long, I inquired of her who was her little friend, and whether he was handsome, and whether he was sensible, and whether he was courageous, and whether he was ardent. She answered all these questions in the affirmative, excepting the last, which she really did not understand. At length came the twilight of thought and showed her blushes. I ceased to persecute her, and only asked her which of us she liked the best and thought the most beautiful. "I like Cleone the best," said she, "and think her the most beautiful, because she took my hand and pitied my confusion when such very strange questions were put to me." However, she kissed me when she saw I was concerned at my impropriety: may-be a part of the kiss was given as a compensation for the severity of her sentence.

LXXVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

We are but pebbles in a gravel walk,
Some blacker and some whiter, pebbles still,
Fit only to be trodden on.

These words were introduced into a comedy lately written by Polus, a remarkably fat person, and who appears to have enjoyed life and liberty as much as any citizen in Athens. I happen to have rendered some services to Philonides the actor, to whom the speech is addressed. He brought me the piece before its representation, telling me that Polus and his friends had resolved to applaud the passage, and to turn their faces toward Pericles. I made him a little present, on condition that, in the representation, he should repeat the following verses in reply, instead of the poet's.

. . . . . Fair Polus!
Can such fierce winds blow over such smooth seas!
I never saw a pebble in my life
So richly set as thou art: now, by Jove,
He who would tread upon thee can be none
Except the proudest of the elephants,
The tallest and the surest-footed beast
In all the stables of the kings of Ind.

The comedy was interrupted by roars of laughter: the friends of Polus slunk away, and he himself made many a violent effort to do the same; but Amphicydes, who stood next, threw his arms round his neck, crying,

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"Behold another Codrus! devoting himself for his country. The infernal Powers require no black bull for sacrifice; they are quite satisfied. Eternal peace with Bœotia! eternal praise to her! what a present! where was he fatted?"

We had invited Polus to dine with us, and now condoled with him on his loss of appetite. The people of Athens were quite out of favour with him.

"I told them what they were fit for," cried he, "and they proved it. Amphicydes . . I do not say he has been at Sparta . . I myself saw him, no long time ago, on the road that leads to Megara . . that city rebelled soon after. His wife died strangely: she had not been married two years, and had grown ugly and thin: he might have used her for a broom if she had hair enough . . perhaps he did; odd noises have been heard in the house. I have no suspicion or spite against any man living . . and, praise to the Gods! I can live without being an informer."

We listened with deep interest, but could not understand the allusion, as he perceived by our looks.

"You will hear to-morrow," said he, "how unworthily I have been treated. Wit draws down Folly on us, and she must have her fling. It does not hit; it does not hit."

Slaves brought in a ewer of water, with several napkins. They were not lost upon Polus, and he declared that those two boys had more sagacity and intuition than all the people in the theatre.

"In your house and your administration, O Pericles, everything is timed well and done well, without our knowing how. Dust will rise," said he, "dust will rise; if we would not raise it we must never stir. They have begun with those who would reform their manners; they will presently carry their violence against those who maintain and execute the laws."

Supper was served.

"A quail, O best Polus!" *

"A quail, O wonderful! may hurt me; but being recommended . ."

* O *best!* O *wonderful!* O *lady!* &c.
Ω βελτιστε: Ω θαυμασιε: Ω δεσποινα.

Conversation was never carried on without these terms, even among philosophers, as we see in Plato, &c.

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It disappeared.

"The breast of that capon . . "

"Capons, being melancholic, breed melancholy within."

"Coriander-seed might correct it, together with a few of those white plump pine-seeds."

"The very desideration ! "

It was corrected.

"Tunny under oil, with marjoram and figs, pickled locusts and pistachioes . . Your stomach seems delicate."

"Alas ! indeed it is declining. Tunny ! tunny ! I dare not, O festoon of the Graces ! I dare not verily. Chian wine alone can appease its seditions."

They were appeased.

Some livers were offered him, whether of fish or fowl I know not, for I can hardly bear to look at that dish. He waved them away, but turned suddenly round, and said, "Youth ! I think I smell fennel."

"There is fennel, O mighty one ! " replied the slave, "and not fennel only, but parsley and honey, pepper and rosemary, garlick from Salamis, and . . "

"Say no more, say no more ; fennel is enough for moderate men and brave ones. It reminds me of the field of Marathon."

The field was won ; nothing was left upon it.

Another slave came forward, announcing loudly and pompously, "Gosling from Brauron ! Sauce . . prunes, mustard-seed, capers, fenu-greek, sesamum, and squills."

"Squills ! " exclaimed Polus, "they soothe the chest. It is not every cook that is deep in the secrets of nature. Brauron ! an ancient city : I have friends in Brauron : I will taste, were it only for remembrance of them."

He made several essays, several pauses.

"But when shall we come to the squills ? " said he, turning to the slave ; "the qualities of the others are negative."

The whole dish was, presently.

"Our pastry," said I, "O illustrious Polus ! is the only thing I can venture to recommend at table ; the other dishes are merely on sufferance, but really our pastry is good : I usually dine entirely upon it."

"Entirely ! " cried he, in amaze.

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"With a glass of water," added I, "and some grapes, fresh or dry."

"To accompany you, O divine Aspasia! though in good truth this said pastry is but a sandy sort of road; no great way can be made in it."

The diffident Polus was not a bad engineer however, and he soon had an opportunity of admiring the workmanship at the bottom of the salver.

Two dishes of roast meat were carried to him. I know not what one was, nor could Polus easily make up his mind upon it: experiment following experiment. Kid however was an old acquaintance.

"Those who kill kids," said he, "deserve well of their country, for they grow up mischievous: the Gods, aware of this, make them very eatable. They require some management, some skill, some reflection: mint, shalot, dandelion, vinegar: strong coercion upon them. Chian wine, boy!"

"What does Pericles eat?"

"Do not mind Pericles. He has eaten of the quails, and some roast fish, besprinkled with bay-leaves for sauce."

"Fish! ay, that makes him so vigilant. Cats . . "

Here he stopped, not however without a diversion in his favour from me, observing that he usually dined on vegetables, fish, and some bird: that his earlier meal was his longest, confectionary, honey, and white bread composing it.

"And Chian or Lesbian?"

"He enjoys a little wine after dinner, preferring the lighter and subacid."

"Wonderful man!" cried he; "and all from such fare as that!"

When he rose from table he seemed by his countenance to be quiet again at heart; nevertheless he said in my ear with a sigh, "Did I possess the power of Pericles, or the persuasion of Aspasia, by the Immortals! I would enrich the galleys with a grand dotation. Every soul of them should . . I, yes, every soul of them . . monsters of ingratitude, hypocrites, traitors, they should for Egypt, for Carthage, Mauritania, Numidia. He will find out before long what dogs he has been skimming the kettle for."

It required an effort to be perfectly composed, at a simile which I imagine has never been used in the Greek language since the days of

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Medea; but I cast down my eyes, and said consolatorily, "It is difficult to do justice to such men as Pericles and Polus."

He would now have let me into the secret, but others saved me.

Our farmers, in the number of their superstitions, entertain a firm belief that any soil is rendered more fertile by burying an ass's head in it. On this idea is founded the epigram I send you: it raised a laugh at dinner.

Leave me thy head when thou art dead,
Speusippus! Prudent farmers say
An ass's skull makes plentiful
The poorest soil; and ours is clay.

LXXIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Anaxagoras is the true, firm, constant friend of Pericles; the golden lamp that shines perpetually on the image I adore. Yet sometimes he speaks severely. On one of these occasions, Pericles took him by the hand, saying,

"O Anaxagoras! sincere and ardent lover of Truth! why do not you love her in such a manner as never to let her see you out of humour?"

"Because," said Anaxagoras, "you divide my affections with her, much to my shame."

Pericles was called away on business; I then said:

"O Anaxagoras! is not Pericles a truly great man?"

He answered, "If Pericles were a truly great man, he would not wish to appear different from what he is; he would know himself, and make others know him; he seems to guard against both. Much is wanting to constitute his greatness. He possesses, it is true, more comprehensiveness and concentration than any living; perhaps more than any since Solon; but he thinks that power over others is better than power over himself; as if a mob were worth a man, and an acclamation were worth a Pericles."

"But," said I, "he has absolute command over himself; and it is chiefly by exerting it that he has obtained an ascendancy over the minds of others."

"Has he rendered them wiser and more virtuous?" said he.

"You know best," replied I, "having lived much longer among them."

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"Perhaps," said Anaxagoras, "I may wrong him; perhaps he has saved them from worse disasters."

"You think him then ambitious?" said I, with some sadness.

"Ambitious!" cried he; "how so! He might have been a philosopher, and he is content to be a ruler."

I was ill at ease.

"Come," said I, "Anaxagoras, come into the garden with me. It is rather too warm indeed out of doors, but we have many evergreens, high and shady, and those who, like you and me, never drink wine, have little to dread from the heat."

Whether the ilexes and bays and oleanders struck his imagination, and presented the simile, I can not tell, but he thus continued in illustration of his discourse,

"There are no indeciduous plants, Aspasia! the greater part lose their leaves in winter, the rest in summer. It is thus with men. The generality yield and are stripped under the first chilly blasts that shake them. They who have weathered these, drop leaf after leaf in the sunshine. The virtues by which they arose to popularity, take another garb, another aspect, another form, and totally disappear. Be not uneasy; the heart of Pericles will never dry up, so many streams run into it."

He retired to his studies; I spoke but little that evening, and slept late.

LXXX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

How can I ever hope to show you, in all its brightness, the character of my friend? I will tell you how; by following Love and Truth. Like most others who have no genius, I do not feel the want of it, at least not here.

A shallow water may reflect the sun as perfectly as a deeper.

The words of Anaxagoras stuck to me like thistles. I resolved to speak in playfulness with the object of our conversation. First I began to hint at enemies. He smiled.

"The children in my orchard," said he, "are not yet grown tall enough to reach the fruit; they may throw at it, but can bring none down."

"Do tell me, O Pericles!" said I, "now we are inseparable for ever, how many struggles with yourself (to say nothing of others) you must have had, before you attained the position you have taken."

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"It is pleasanter," answered he, "to think of our glory than of the means by which we acquired it.

"When we see the horses that have won at the Olympian games, do we ask what oats they have eaten to give them such velocity and strength? Do those who swim admirably, ever trouble their minds about the bladders they swam upon in learning, or inquire what beasts supplied them? When the winds are filling our sails, do we lower them and delay our voyage, in order to philosophise on the particles of air composing them, or to speculate what region produced them or what becomes of them afterward?"

LXXXI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

At last, Aspasia, you love indeed. The perfections of your beloved interest you less than the imperfections, which you no sooner take up for reprehension, than you admire, embrace, and defend. Happy, happy, Aspasia! but are you wise and good and equable, and fond of sincerity, as formerly! Nay, do not answer me. The Gods forbid that I should force you to be ingenious, and love you for it. How much must you have lost before you are praised for that!

Archelaüs, of all our philosophers the most quiet man, and the most patient investigator, will bring you this. He desires to be the hearer of Anaxagoras.

LXXXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I received our countryman with great pleasure. He was obliged to be *my* hearer for several hours: I hope his patience will never be so much tried by Anaxagoras. I placed them together at table; but Anaxagoras would not break through his custom; nothing of philosophy. Our repast would have been even less talkative than usual, had not Anaxagoras asked our guest whether the earlier Milesian authors, poets or historians, had mentioned Homer.

"I find not a word about him in any one of them," replied he, "although we have the works of Cadmus and Phocylides, the former no admirable historian, the latter an indifferent poet, but not the less likely to mention him; and they are supposed to have lived within three centuries of his age. Permit my first question to you, in my search after truth, to be this; whether his age were not much earlier?"

"This is not the only question," said Anaxagoras, "on which you

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will hear from me the confession of my utter ignorance. I am interested in everything that relates to the operations of the human mind; and Pericles has in his possession every author whose works have been transcribed. The number will appear quite incredible to you: there can not be fewer than two hundred. I find poetry to which is attributed an earlier date than to Homer's; but stupidity and barbarism are no convincing proofs. I find Cretan, Ionian, Laconian, and Bœotian, written certainly more than three centuries ago; the language is not copious, is not fluent, is not refined. Pericles says it is all of it inharmonious: of this I can not judge; he can. Dropides and Mimnermus wrote no better verses than the servant-girls sing upon our staircases. Archilochus and Alcman, who lived a century earlier, composed much grander; but where there is at once ferocity and immodesty, either the age must have been barbarous or the poet must have been left behind it. Sappho was in reality the reviver of poetry, teaching it to humanise and delight; Simonides brought it to perfection. The muse of Lesbos, as she is called, and Alcæus, invented each a novel species of strophe. Aspasia prefers the poetry of Sappho and the metre of Alcæus, which, however, I think she informs us, is less adapted to her subjects than her own is."

"It appears to me," said I, "that everyone who felt strong in poetry was ambitious of being an inventor in its measures. Archilochus, the last of any note, invented the iambic."

"True, O Aspasia!" said Pericles, "but not exactly in the sense usually received. He did not invent, as many suppose, the senarian iambic, which is coeval almost with the language itself, and many of which creep into the closest prose composition, but he was the first who subjoined a shorter to it, the barb to the dart, so fatal to Cleobule and Lycambes."

"His first," said I, "is like the trot of a mastiff, his second is like the spring at the throat.

"Homer alone has enriched the language with sentences full of harmony. How long his verse was created, how long his Gods had lived, before *him*, how long he himself before *us*, is yet uncertain, although Herodotus* is of opinion that he is nearer to us than Pericles and Anaxagoras admit. But these two philosophers place

* The *Life of Homer*, appended to the works of Herodotus, is spurious.

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sun, moon, and stars, beyond all reasonable limits; I know not how far off."

"We none of us know," said Pericles, "but Anaxagoras hopes that, in a future age, human knowledge will be more extensive and more correct; and Meton has encouraged us in our speculations. The heavenly bodies may keep their secrets two or three thousand years yet; but one or other will betray them to some wakeful favourite, some Endymion beyond Latmos, perhaps in regions undiscovered, certainly in uncalculated times. Men will know more of them than they will ever know of Homer. Our knowledge on this miracle of our species is unlikely to increase."

LXXXIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Pericles, who is acknowledged to have a finer ear than any of our poets or rhetoricians, is of opinion that the versification in all the books, of both Iliad and Odyssea, was modulated by the same master-key. Sophocles too, certainly less jolted than you would suppose, by the deep ruts, angular turns, and incessant jerks of the iambic, tells me that he finds no other heroic verses at all resembling it in the rhythm, and that, to his apprehension, it is not dissimilar in the two poems.

But I must continue, while I remember them perfectly, the words of Pericles.

"The Ulysses of the *Iliad* and *Odyssea* is not the same, but the Homer is. Might not the poet have collected, in his earlier voyages, many wonderful tales about the chieftain of Ithaca; about his wanderings and return; about his wife and her suitors? Might not afterward the son or grandson have solicited his guest and friend to place the sagacious, the courageous, the enduring man, among the others whom he was celebrating in detached poems, as leaders against Troy? He describes with precision everything in Ithaca; it is evident he must have been upon the spot. Of all other countries, of Sicily, of Italy, of Phrygia, he quite as evidently writes from tradition and representation. Phrygia was subject to the Assyrian kings at the time when he commences his siege. The Greeks, according to him, had been ravaging the country many years, and had swept away many cities. What were the Assyrian kings doing? Did the Grecians lose no men by war, by climate, by disease, by time, in the whole ten years? Their horses must have been strong and long-

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lived: an excellent breed! to keep their teeth and mettle for five-and-twenty. I should have imagined that some of them must have got lamed, some few perhaps foundered; surely here and there a chariot can have had but one remaining, and he, in all probability, not in the very best condition. I can not but think that Homer took from Sesostris the shield that he has given to Achilles. The Greeks never worked gold so skilfully as in this shield, until our own Phidias taught them; and even he possesses not the art of giving all the various colours to the metal, which are represented as designating the fruitage, and other things included in this stupendous work, and which the Egyptians in his time, and long earlier, understood. How happened it that the Trojans had Greek names, and the leader of the Greeks an Egyptian one? When I was at Byzantion, I had the curiosity to visit the imaginary scene of their battles. I saw many sepulchral monuments, of the most durable kind, conical elevations of earth, on which there were sheep and goats at pasture. There were ruins beyond, but neither of a great city nor of an ancient one. The only ancient walls I saw were on the European coast, those of Byzantion, which Aspasia claims as the structure of Miletus, and which the people of Megara tell us were founded by their forefathers, less than two centuries ago. But neither Miletus nor Megara was built when these walls were entire. They belong to the unknown world, and are sometimes called Pelasgian, sometimes Cyclopean; appellations without meaning; signs that signify nothing; inscriptions that point out the road to places where there is neither place nor road. Walls of this massive structure surround the ruins of Phocœa, destroyed by Cyrus; they are also found in Tyrrhenia. Our acropolis was surmounted by such, until the administration of Themistocles, who removed the stones to serve as foundations to the works in the harbour; the occasion being urgent, and the magnitude of the blocks being admirably proper for that solid structure."

Cleone! are you tired? rest then.

LXXXIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Several times had Pericles been silent, expecting and inviting our guests to assist him in the investigation.

"I have no paradox to maintain, no partiality to defend," said he. "Some tell us that there were twenty Homers, some deny that there was ever one. It were idle and foolish to shake the contents of a vase

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in order to let them settle at last. We are perpetually labouring to destroy our delight, our composure, our devotion to superior power. Of all the animals upon earth we least know what is good for us. My opinion is, that what is best for us is our admiration of good. No man living venerates Homer more than I do. He was the only author I read when I was a boy, for our teachers are usually of opinion that wisdom and poetry are like fruit for children, unwholesome if too fresh. Simonides had indeed grown somewhat sound; Pindar was heating; Æschylus . . . ay, but Æschylus was almost at the next door. Homer then nourished my fancy, animated my dreams, awoke me in the morning, marched with me, sailed with me, taught me morals, taught me language, taught me music and philosophy and war.

"Ah, were he present at this hour among us! that I might ask him how his deities entered Troy. In Phrygia there was but one goddess, the mother of all the Gods, Cybele. Unlike our mortal mothers, she was displeased if you noticed her children; indeed she disowned them. Her dignity, her gravity, her high antiquity, induced the natives of the islands, and afterward the other Greeks, to place their little Gods under her protection, and to call her their mother. Jupiter had his Ida, but not the Phrygian; and Pallas was worshipped in her citadels, but not above the streams of Simöis and Scamander. Our holy religion has not yet found its way far beyond us; like the myrtle and olive, it loves the sea-air, and flourishes but upon few mountains in the interior. The Cabiri still hold Samothrace; and we may almost hear the cries of human victims in the north.

"If there were any true history of the times we are exploring, perhaps we might find in it that many excursions, combined and simultaneous, had utterly failed; and that the disasters of many chiefs engaged in them were partly concealed from the nations they governed by the sacred veil of poetry. Of those who are reputed to have sailed against Troy, none returned prosperous, none with the men he had led out; most were forbidden to land again upon their native shores, and some who attempted it were slain. Such is usually the fate of the unsuccessful. It is more probable that the second great naval expedition of the Greeks went out to avenge the disasters of the first, the Argonautic; and the result was nearly the same. Of the Argonauts few returned. Sparta lost her Castor and

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Pollux; Thessaly her Jason; and I am more disposed to believe that the head of Orpheus rolled down the Phasis than down the Hebrus.

"The poets gave successes which the Gods denied. But these things concern us little; the poet is what we seek. Needless is it to remark that the *Iliad* is a work of much reflection and various knowledge; the *Odyssea* is the marvellous result of a vivid and wild imagination. Aspasia prefers it. Homer, in nearly the thirty years which I conceive to have intervened between the fanciful work and the graver, had totally lost his pleasantries. Polyphemus could amuse him no longer; Circe lighted up in vain her fires of cedar-wood; Calypso had lost her charms; her maidens were mute around her; the Lestrigons lay asleep; the Syrens sang

> 'Come hither, O passer by! come hither,
> O glory of the Achaians!'

and the smooth waves quivered with the sound, but the harp of the old man had no chord that vibrated.

"In the *Odyssea* he invokes the Muse; in the *Iliad* he invokes her as a Goddess he had invoked before. He begins the *Odyssea* as the tale of a family, to which he would listen as she rehearsed it; the *Iliad* as a song of warriors and divinities, worthy of the Goddess herself to sing before the world.

"Demonstrate that metaphors are discoverable, drawn from things believed to have been uninvented in the Homeric age; what does it prove? Merely that Homer, who lived among the islands, and among those who had travelled into all the known regions of the world, had collected more knowledge than the shepherds and boar-hunters on the continent.

"Demonstrate that some books in the compilation retain slight traces of a language not exactly the same as the others. What then? Might they not have been composed while he visited countries in which that dialect was indigenous? or might they not have been found there at the first collection of the songs, having undergone some modification from the singers, adapted to the usages and phraseology of the people?

"Who doubts that what was illegible or obscure in the time of Lycurgus, was rendered clearer by the learned Spartan? that some Cretan words, not the Dorian of Sparta, had crept in; that others were substituted; that Solon, Pisistratus, and Hipparchus, had also

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to correct a few of these corrections, and many things more? They found a series of songs; never was there a series of such length without an oversight or gap.

"Shall the *salpinx* be sounded in my ear? Homer may have introduced it by way of allusion in one poem, not wanting it in the other. The Grecians of his time never used it in battle; eastern nations did; and perhaps had he known the Phrygians better, its blasts would have sounded on the plains of Troy. He would have discovered that trumpets had been used among them for many ages. We possess no knowledge of any nation who cultivated the science of music so early, or employed so great a variety of wind-instruments, unless it be the Sidonian. Little did he know of Phrygia, and as little do we know of him. His beautiful creation lies displayed before us; the creator is hidden in his own splendour. I can more easily believe that his hand constructed the whole, than that twenty men could be found, at nearly the same time, each of genius sufficient for the twentieth part; because in many centuries there arose not a single one capable of such a production as that portion.

"Archilochus and Simonides are excellent only in their shorter poems; they could not have whistled so well throughout a long march. Difficulties are to be overcome on both sides. We have no grammarians worthy of the appellation; none in any district of Greece has studied the origin and etymology of his language. We sing like the birds, equally ignorant whence our voice arises. What is worse, we are fonder of theories than of truth, and believe that we have not room enough to build up anything, until we subvert what we find before us. Be it so; but let it be only what is obnoxious, what opposes our reason, what disturbs our tranquillity of mind; not what shows us the extent of the one, the potency of the other, and, consoling us for being mortal, assures us that our structures may be as durable as those of the Gods themselves. The name of Homer will be venerated as long as the holiest of theirs; I dare not say longer; I dare not say by wiser men. I hope I am guilty of no impiety; I should aggravate it by lowering Homer, the loftiest of their works."

LXXXV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

We are losing, day by day, one friend or other. Artemidora of Ephesus was betrothed to Elpenor, and their nuptials, it was believed,

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were at hand. How gladly would Artemidora have survived Elpenor. I pitied her almost as much as if she had. I must ever love true lovers on the eve of separation. These indeed were little known to me until a short time before. We became friends when our fates had made us relatives. On these occasions there are always many verses, but not always so true in feeling and in fact as those which I shall now transcribe for you.

"Artemidora! Gods invisible,
While thou art lying faint along the couch,
Have tied the sandal to thy veined feet,
And stand beside thee, ready to convey
Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.
Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness
Away, and voices like thine own come nigh,
Soliciting, nor vainly, thy embrace."
Artemidora sigh'd, and would have press'd
The hand now pressing hers, but was too weak.
Fate's shears were over her dark hair unseen
While thus Elpenor spake: he look'd into
Eyes that had given light and life erewhile
To those above them, those now dim with tears
And watchfulness. Again he spake of joy
Eternal. At that word, that sad word, *joy*,
Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once more,
Her head fell back: one sob, one loud deep sob
Swell'd through the darken'd chamber; 'twas not hers:
With her that old boat incorruptible,
Unwearied, undiverted in its course,
Had plash'd the water up the farther strand.

LXXXVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Aristophanes often dines with us; nevertheless he is secretly an enemy of Pericles, and, fearing to offend him personally, is satirical on most of our friends. Meton, whose character you know already, great in astronomy, great in geometry, great in architecture, was consulted by Pericles on beautifying the streets of the city, which are close and crooked. No sooner had Aristophanes heard this, than he began to compose a comedy, entitled *The Birds*. He has here represented our quiet contemplative Meton, with a rule and compass in his hands, uttering the most ludicrous absurdities. Meton is a plain, unassuming, inoffensive man, and never speaks inconsiderately. The character is clumsily drawn; but that fault was easily corrected, by

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representing poor Meton under the chastisement of the cudgel. There is so much wit in this, I doubt whether any audience can resist it. There is magic in every stroke, and what was amiss is mended and made whole again ere the hammer falls. How easy a way of setting all things to rights, with only one dissentient voice!

In the same comedy is ridiculed the project of Pericles, on a conformity of weights and measures in Attica and her dependencies. More wit! another beating!

When Aristophanes made us the next visit, Pericles, after greeting him with much good-nature, and after various conversations with him, seemed suddenly to recollect something, and, with more familiarity than usual, took him gently by the elbow, led him a little aside, and said with a smile, and in a low voice,

"My dear friend Aristophanes! I find you are by no means willing to receive the same measure as you give; but remember, the people have ordered the adjustment, the surest preservative against fraud, particularly that by which the poorer are mostly the sufferers. Take care they do not impeach you, knowing as you do how inefficient is my protection. It is chiefly on such an occasion I should be sorry to be in a minority."

Aristophanes blushed and looked alarmed. Pericles took him by the hand, whispering in his ear, "Do not let us enter into a conspiracy against Equity, by attacking the uniformity of weights and measures; nor against Comedy, by giving the magistrates a pretext to forbid its representation."

Aristophanes turned toward Pentarces, who stood near him, and said,

"I can write a comedy as well as most; Pericles can act one better than any."

Aristophanes, in my opinion, might have easily been the first lyric poet now living, except Sophocles and Euripides; he chose rather to be the bitterest satirist. How many, adorned with all the rarities of intellect, have stumbled on the entrance into life, and have made a wrong choice on the very thing which was to determine their course for ever! This is among the reasons, and perhaps is the principal one, why the wise and the happy are two distinct classes of men.

LXXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I had retired before Aristophanes went home. On my return, it was evident that some one present had inveighed against the

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poet's effrontery, for I was in time to catch these words of Pericles:

"Why should I be angry with the writers of comedy? Is it because they tell me of the faults I find in myself? Surely not; for he who finds them in himself may be quite certain that others have found them in him long before, and have shown much forbearance in the delay.

"Is it because I am told of those I have not discovered in me? Foolish indeed were this. I am to be angry, it seems, because a man forewarns me that I have enemies in my chamber, who will stab me when they find me asleep, and because he helps me to catch them and disarm them.

"But it is such an indignity to be ridiculed! I incurred a greater when I threw myself into the way of ridicule: a greater still should I suffer if I tried whether it could be remedied by resentment.

"Ridicule often parries resentment, but resentment never yet parried ridicule."

LXXXVIII. ASPASIA TO HERODOTUS.

Herodotus! if there is any one who admires your writings more than another, it is I. No residence in Attica will ever make me prefer the dialect to ours; no writer will charm my ear as you have done; and yet you can not bring me to believe that the sun is driven out of his course by storms; nor any of the consequences you deduce from it, occasioning the overflow of the Nile. The opinion you consider as unfounded, namely, that it arises from the melting of the snows, and from the periodical rains on the mountains of Ethiopia, is however that of Pericles and Anaxagoras, who attribute it also to Thales, in their estimation the soundest and shrewdest of philosophers. They appear to have very strange notions about the sun, about his magnitude, his position, and distance; and I doubt whether you could persuade them that the three stoutest winds are able to move him one furlong. I am a great doubter, you see; but they, I do assure you, are greater. Pericles is of opinion that natural philosophy has made but little progress; and yet that many more discoveries have burst open before the strenuous inquirer than have been manifested to the world; that some have been suppressed by a fear of the public, and some by a contempt for it.

"In the intellectual," said he, "as in the physical, men grasp you firmly and tenaciously by the hand, creeping close at your side, step

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for step, while you lead them into darkness; but when you conduct them into sudden light, they start and quit you."

O Herodotus! may your life and departure be happy! But how can it be expected! No other deities have ever received such honours as you have conferred upon the Muses; and alas, how inefficient are they to reward or protect their votaries!

LXXXIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

The tragedy of Phrynicus, on the devastation of our city by the Persians, will outlast all the cities now flourishing on earth.* Heavy was the mulct to which the poet was condemned by the Athenians for the tears he drew from them in the theatre.

Is it not remarkable that we have never found any Milesian poem on the same subject? Surely there must have been several. Within how short a period have they perished! Lately, in searching the houses of such inhabitants as were suspected of partiality to the interests of Lacedæmon, these verses were discovered. They bear the signature of *Aletheia, daughter of Charidemus and Astyage.*

We have often heard her story. Often have we sat upon the mound of ruins under which she lies buried: often have we plucked from it the white cyclamen, sweetest of all sweet odours, and played with its stiff reverted little horns, pouring forth a parsimonious fragrance, won only when we applied to them tenderly and closely.

Whether poor Aletheia gave for life more than life's value, it were worse than curiosity to inquire. She loved her deliverer; and, at the instigation of many less gentle, she was slain for loving him. When the city was again in possession of the citizens, she was stoned to death for favouring the invader; and her mother rushed forward and shared it. These are things you know; her poem, her only one extant, you do not. You will find in it little of poetry, but much of what is better and rarer, true affection.

ALETHEIA TO PHRAORTES.

Phraortes! where art thou?
The flames were panting after us, their darts
Had pierced to many hearts
Before the Gods, who heard nor prayer nor vow;

* This tragedy, which produced a more powerful effect than any other on record, has failed however to fulfill the prophecy of Cleone: the Ode of Aletheia, on which she places so small a value, has outlived it.

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Temples had sunk to earth, and other smoke
O'er riven altars broke
Than curled from myrrh and nard,
When like a God among
Arm'd hosts and unarm'd throng
Thee I discern'd, implored, and caught one brief regard.

Thou passest: from thy side
Sudden two bowmen ride
And hurry me away.
Thou and all hope were gone . .
They loos'd me . . and alone
In a closed tent 'mid gory arms I lay.

How did my tears then burn
When, dreading thy return,
Behold thee reappear!
Nor helm nor sword nor spear . .

In violet gold-hemm'd vest
Thou camest forth; too soon!
Fallen at thy feet, clasp't to thy breast,
I struggle, sob, and swoon.

"O send me to my mother! bid her come,
And take my last farewell!
One blow! . . enough for both . . one tomb . .
'Tis there *our* happy dwell."

Thou orderest: call'd and gone
At once they are who breathe for thy command.
Thou stoodest nigh me, soothing every moan,
And pressing in both thine my hand.

Then, and then only, when it tore
My hair to hide my face;
And gently did thy own bend o'er
The abject head war-doomed to dire disgrace.

Ionian was thy tongue,
And when thou badest me to raise
That head, nor fear in aught thy gaze,
I dared look up . . but dared not long.

"Wait, maiden, wait! if none are here
Bearing a charm to charm a tear,
There may (who knows?) be found at last
Some solace for the sorrow past."

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My mother, ere the sounds had ceas'd,
Burst in, and drew me down:
Her joy o'erpowered us both, her breast
Covered lost friends and ruin'd town.

Sweet thought! but yielding now
To many harsher! By what blow
Art thou dissevered from me? War,
That hath career'd too far,
Closeth his pinions. "Come, Phraortes, come
To thy fond friends at home!"

Thus beckons Love. Away then, wishes wild!
O may thy mother be as blest
As one whose eyes will sink to rest
Blessing thee for her rescued child!

Ungenerous still my heart must be:
Throughout the young and festive train
Which thou revisitest again
May none be happier (this I fear) than she!

XC. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Perhaps I like the Ode of Aletheia more than you do, because you sent it me; and you perhaps would have liked it more than I, had I sent it you. There are writings which must lie long upon the straw before they mellow to the taste; and there are summer fruits which can not abide the keeping.

My heart assures me that Aletheia, had she lived, might have excelled in poetry; and the loss of a lover is a help to it. We must defer our attempts to ascertain her station in the world of poetry: for we never see the just dimensions of what is close before our eyes. Faults are best discovered near, and beauties at some distance.

Aletheia, who found favour with Cleone, is surely not unworthy to take her seat in the library of Pericles.

I will look for a cyclamen to place within the scroll: I must find it and gather it and place it there myself. Sweet, hapless Aletheia!

XCI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Nothing is pleasanter to me than exploring in a library. What a delight in being a discoverer! Among a loose accumulation of

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poetry, the greater part excessively bad, the verses I am about to transcribe are perhaps the least so.

Life passes not as some men say,
If you will only urge his stay,
And treat him kindly all the while.
He flies the dizzy strife of towns,
Cowers before thunder-bearing frowns,
But freshens up again at song and smile.

Ardalia! we will place him here,
And promise that nor sigh nor tear
Shall ever trouble his repose.
What precious seal will you impress
To ratify his happiness?
That rose thro' which you breathe? Come, bring that rose.

XCII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Knowing how desirous I have always been to learn the history of Athens for these last fifty years, and chiefly that part of it in which my Pericles has partaken so largely; and to reward my forbearance in abstaining from every close and importunate inquiry, he placed a scrap of paper in my hands this morning.

"Read that," said he.

It was no easy matter: few sentences would have been legible without my interpreter; indeed there were not many unerased.

"This speech," replied he, "occupied me one whole night, and somewhat of the next morning: I had so very much *not* to say."

Aware that the party of Cimon would interest the people in his behalf, so that a leader from among his relatives or friends might be proposed and brought forward, Pericles was resolved to anticipate these exertions. See his few words.

"We have lost, O Athenians! not a town, nor a battle; these you would soon regain; but we have lost a great man, a true lover of his country, Cimon, son of Miltiades.

"I well remember the grief you manifested at the necessity of removing him for a time, from among the insidious men who would have worked upon his generous temper, ductile as gold. Never could I have believed I had sufficient interest with some I see before me, firm almost unto hardness, whose patriotism and probity had been the most alarmed; but they listened to me with patience, and revoked the sentence of banishment. Cimon returned from Sparta,

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took the command of your armies, vanquished the Persians, and imposed on them such conditions as will humble their pride for ever.

"Our fathers were ungenerous to his: we will, as becomes us, pay their debts, and remove the dust from their memory. Miltiades was always great, and only once unsuccessful: Cimon was greater, and never unfortunate but in the temporary privation of your affections. History offers us no example of so consummate a commander.

"I propose that a statue be erected to Cimon, son of Miltiades, vanquisher of the Persians."

XCIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

There are secrets which not even love should try to penetrate. I am afraid of knowing who caused the banishment of Cimon: certainly he was impeached by Pericles, who nevertheless praised him highly whenever his name was mentioned. He has allowed me to transcribe his speech after the sentence of the judges, and with it his letter of recall.

TO THE ATHENIANS.

On the Banishment of Cimon.

In your wisdom, O Athenians, you have decreed that Cimon son of Miltiades be exiled from our city.

Whatever may have been the errors or the crimes of Cimon, much of them should, in justice to yourselves, and in humanity to the prosecuted, be ascribed to the perversity of that faction, which never ceases or relaxes in its attempts to thwart your determinations, and to deprive you of authority at home, of respect in the sight of Greece.

But I adjure you to remember the services both of Cimon and of Miltiades; and to afford the banished man no reason or plea to call in question your liberality. Permit the rents of his many farms in Attica to be carried to him in Sparta; and let it never be said that a citizen of Athens was obliged to the most illiberal and penurious of people for a sustenance. Not indeed that there is any danger of Sparta entertaining him too honourably. She may pay for services; but rather for those which are to be performed than for those which have been; and to the man rather who may do her harm than to him who can do it no longer.

Let us hope that at some future day Cimon may be aware of his

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mistake, and regard with more veneration the image of his father than the throne of his father's enemy.

XCIV. PERICLES TO CIMON.

There are few cities, O Cimon, that have men for their inhabitants. Whatever is out of Greece, and not Grecian, is nearer the animal world than the intellectual: some even in Greece are but midway. Leave them behind you; return to your country, and conquer her assailants. Wholesome is the wisdom that we have gathered from misfortune, and sweet the repose that dwells upon renown.

XCV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Generally we are little apt to exaggerate merit. In our maladies of the mind the cold fit usually is longer and more intense than the hot, and our dreams are rarely of water in the desert. We must have been among the departed before we experience this sensation. In our road through life, we may happen to meet with a man casting a stone reverentially to enlarge the cairn of another, which stone he had carried in his bosom to sling against that very other's head. Seriously, my Cleone, I am inclined to think that even in these dark days (as they are called) of literature we may occasionally catch a glimpse of poetry. We should be laughed at if we ventured to compare the living with the dead, who always are preferable, but there are choruses in Sophocles and Euripides as pathetical as those tender words of Sappho in her invocation to Hesperos: "Thou bringest the wine, thou bringest the kid, thou bringest the maiden to her mother." Certainly these words are very unsophistical, and they who have seen others weep at them, weep also. But pardon me, if looking attentively, you find no letter in the sentence obliterated by a tear of mine. Sometimes I fancy that the facility and pliancy of our language is the reason why many of the most applauded verses are written with more intenseness of feeling and less expenditure of thought. What is graceful must be easy; but many things are very easy which are not very graceful. There is a great deal even of Attic poetry in which a slight covering of wax is drawn over a bundle of the commonest tow and tatters: we must not bring it too near the lamp . . But it is something to abstain from an indulgence in grossness, prolixity, and exaggeration, which are never the signs of fertility, but frequently the reverse. This abstinence is truly Attic,

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but Attic not exclusively: for Pindar has given manifold examples of it, and is heavy and tedious then only when he wipes away the foam off his bit with old stories and dry genealogies.

SPEECH OF PERICLES.

On the Defection of Eubœa and Megara.

Eubœa has rejected our authority and alliance, Megara our friendship. Under what pretext? That we have employed in the decoration of our city the sums of money they stipulated to contribute annually; a subsidy to resist the Persians. What! must we continue a war of extermination with Persia, when she no longer has the power to molest us? when peace has been sworn and proclaimed? Do we violate the compact with our confederates? No; men of Athens! our fleets are in harbour, every ship in good condition; our arsenals are well stored; and we are as prompt and as able now to repell aggression as we ever were.

Are our dues then to be withholden from us, because we have anticipated our engagements? because our navy and our army are in readiness before they are wanted? because, while our ungrateful allies were plotting our ruin, we were watching over their interests and providing for their security? States, like private men, are subject to the distemper of ingratitude, erasing from their memory the impression of past benefits; but it appears to be peculiar to the Megarians to recompense them with hatred and animosity. Not only have we protected them from aggression, by building for them the very walls from which they now defy us; but, when Mardonius sent against them, at Mount Cithæron, the whole force of the Median cavalry, under the command of Magestios, and when they called aloud to every near battalion of the Grecian army, and when Pausanias in vain repeated the exhortation, three hundred Athenians, led by Olympiodoros son of Lampon, threw themselves forward from Erythrai, and, after losing many brave comrades, rescued from imminent death the fathers of those degenerate men who are now in the vanguard of conspirators against us. Ingratitude may be left to the chastisement of the Gods, but the sword must consolidate broken treaties. No state can be respected if fragment after fragment may be detached from it with impunity; if traitors are permitted to delude and discompose the contented, and to seduce the ignorant from their

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allegiance; if loyalty is proclaimed a weakness, sedition a duty, conspiracy wisdom, and rebellion heroism. It is a crime then for us to embellish our city! it is a reproach to enlarge and fortify our harbours! In vain have we represented to the clamorous and refractory, that their annual contributions are partly due to us for past exertions, and partly the price of our protection, at this time, and in future; and not against Persia only, but against pirates. Our enemies have persuaded them that rebellion and war are better things; our enemies, who were lately theirs, and who by this perfidious instigation are about to become so more cruelly than ever. Are Athenians avaricious? are Athenians oppressive? Even the slaves in our city have easier access to the comforts and delights of life than the citizens of almost any other. Until of late the Megarians were proud of our consanguinity, and refused to be called the descendants of Apollo, in hopes to be acknowledged as the children of Pandion. Although in later times they became the allies of Sparta, they can not but remember that we have always been their friends, often their deliverers; and it is only for their dishonesty and perfidy that we now are resolved at last to prohibit them from the advantages of our ports. Sparta and Corinth have instigated them; Corinth, whose pride and injustice have driven Corcyra, with her fleets, to seek deliverance in the Piræus. What have we to fear from so strange a union as that of Corinth and Sparta? Are any two nations so unlike? so little formed for mutual succour or for mutual esteem? Hitherto we have shared both our wealth and our dangers with Eubœa. At the conclusion of a successful war, at the signature of a most honourable and advantageous peace, we are derided and reproached. What is it they discover to despise in us? I will tell you what it is. It is the timid step of blind men: this they saw in us while they were tampering with Sparta. Not ashamed of their seduction, they now walk hand in hand, with open front, and call others to join in their infamy. They have renounced our amity, they have spurned our expostulations, they have torn our treaties, and they have defied our arms. At the peril of being called a bad citizen, I lament your blindness, O Megara and Eubœa!

XCVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I find, among the few records in my hands, that Pericles went in person, and conquered the faithless Megara and the refractory

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Eubœa. Before he sailed to attack the island, he warned the Athenians against an inconsiderate parsimony, which usually terminates in fruitless expenditure. He told them plainly that Eubœa was capable of a protracted and obstinate resistance; and he admonished them that, whatever reverses the arms of Athens might experience, they should continue the war, and consider the dominion of the island a thing necessary to their existence as a nation; that whoever should devise or counsel the separation of Eubœa from Athens be declared guilty of treason, and punished with death.

"If Thebes, in a future war," said he, "should take possession of this productive country, and shut up, as she easily might, the passage of the Euripus, she would gain an ascendancy over us, from which we never could recover. Losses, defeats, inadequate supplies, may tempt her; she would always have Sparta for an ally on such an occasion. Indeed, it is wonderful that the Bœotians, as brave a race of men as any in Greece, and stronger in body, should not have been her masters. Perhaps it is the fertility of her own territory that kept her content with her possessions, and indisposed the cultivators of so rich a soil from enterprise and hazard. Eubœa is no less fertile than Bœotia, from which she is separated by the distance of a stone's throw. Give me fifty galleys, and five thousand men, and Eubœa shall fall ere Sparta can come to her assistance."

XCVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Perpetual as have been the wars of Attica, she is overpeopled. A colony hoisted sail for the Chersonese; another to repeople the ruined walls of Sybaris. Happy the families whose fathers give them lands to cultivate, instead of keeping them in idleness at home; such are the founders of colonies. The language of this city is spoken in Italy, in Sicily, in Asia, in Africa, and even on the coast of Gaul, among the yelpings and yells of Kimbers and Sicambers.

Surely the more beneficent of the Gods must look down with delight on these fruit-trees planted in the forest. May the healthfullest dews of heaven descend on them!

We are now busied in the Propylæa; they, although unfinished, are truly magnificent. Which will remain the longest, the traces of the walls or of the colonies? Of the future we know nothing, of the past little, of the present less; the mirror is too close to our eyes, and our own breath dims it.

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XCVIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

I have only time to send you a few perfumes and a few verses. These I transcribe out of a little volume of Erinna: the perfumes came to me from Syria.

Blessed be the man whose beneficent providence gave the flowers another life! We seem to retain their love when their beauty has departed.

ERINNA TO LEUCONÖE.

If comfort is unwelcome, can I think
Reproof aught less will be?
The cup I bring to cool thee, wilt thou drink,
Fever'd Leuconöe?

Rather with Grief than Friendship wouldst thou dwell,
Because Love smiles no more!
Bent down by culling bitter herbs, to swell
A cauldron that boils o'er.

XCIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Thanks for the verses! I hope Leuconöe was as grateful as I am, and as sensible to their power of soothing.

Thanks too for the perfumes! Pericles is ashamed of acknowledging he is fond of them; but I am resolved to betray one secret of his: I have caught him several times *trying* them, as he called it.

How many things are there that people pretend to dislike, without any reason, as far as we know, for the dislike or the pretence!

I love sweet odours. Surely my Cleone herself must have breathed her very soul into these! Let me smell them again: let me inhale them into the sanctuary of my breast, lighted up by her love for their reception.

But, ah Cleone! what an importunate and exacting creature is Aspasia! Have you no willows fresh-peeled? none lying upon the bank for baskets, white, rounded, and delicate, as your fingers! How fragrant they were formerly! I have seen none lately. Do you remember the cross old Hermesionax? how he ran to beat us for breaking his twigs? and how, after looking in our faces, he seated himself down again, finished his basket, disbursed from a goat-skin a corroded clod of rancid cheese, put it in, pushed it to us, forced it under my arm, told us to carry it home *with the Gods!* and lifted up both hands and blest us.

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I do not wish *that* one exactly; cheese is the cruellest of deaths to me; and Pericles abhors it.

I am running over trifling occurrences which you must have forgotten. You are upon the spot, and have no occasion to recall to memory how the munificent old basket-maker looked after us, not seeing his dog at our heels; how we coaxed the lean, shaggy, suspicious animal; how many devices we contrived to throw down, or let slip, so that the good man might not observe it, the pestilence you insisted on carrying; how many names we called the dog by, ere we found the true one, *Cyrus;* how, when we had drawn him behind the lentisk, we rewarded him for his assiduities, holding each an ear nevertheless, that he might not carry back the gift to his master; and how we laughed at our fears, when a single jerk of the head served at once to engulf the treasure and to disengage him.

I shall always love the smell of the peeled willow. Have you none for me? Is there no young poplar then, with a tear in his eye on bursting into bud? I am not speaking by metaphor and Asiatically. I want the poplars, the willows, the water-lilies, and the soft green herbage. How we enjoyed it on the Mæander! what liberties we took with it! robbing it of the flowers it had educated, of those it was rearing, of those that came confidently out to meet us, and of those that hid themselves. None escaped us. For these remembrances, green is the colour I love best. It brings me to the *Fortunate Island* and my Cleone; it brings me back to Childhood, the proud little nurse of Youth, brighter of eye and lighter of heart than Youth herself.

These are not regrets, Cleone; they are respirations, necessary to existence. You may call them half-wishes if you will. We are poor indeed when we have no half-wishes left us. The heart and the imagination close the shutters the instant they are gone.

Do not chide me then for coming to you after the blossoms and buds and herbage: do not keep to yourself all the grass on the Mæander. We used to share it; we will now. I love it wherever I can get a glimpse of it. It is the home of the eyes, ever ready to receive them, and spreading its cool couch for their repose.

C. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Demophile, poor honest faithful creature! has yielded to her infirmities. I have spent almost as many hours with her in these

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last autumnal months, as I did in the earliest of my existence. She could not carry me in her arms again, but she was happy when mine were about her neck, and said they made her stronger. Do you remember how often she dropt my hand to take yours, because you never cried? saying,

"People never weep nor work, themselves, who can make others weep and work for them. That little one will have weeper and worker too about her presently. Look at her, Cleone! Can not you look like that? Have not you two lips and two eyes? Aspasia has not three. Try now! Mind how I do it!"

Good simple heart!

When she was near her end, she said to me,

"Do you ever go and read those names and bits of verses on the stones yonder? You and Aspasia used formerly. Some of them tell us to be sad and sorry for folks who died a hundred years ago; others to imitate men and women we never should have had a chance of seeing, had they been living yet. All we can learn from them is this, that our city never had any bad people in it, but has been filled with weeping and wailing from its foundation upward."

These things puzzled Demophile: she was somewhat vext that she could not well comprehend them, but praised the Gods that our house was safe, when many others must have been rent asunder: such a power of lamentation!

"My name," said she, "I believe, is a difficult and troublesome one to pinfold in a tombstone: nobody has ever tried how it would sound in verse: but if you and Aspasia think me worth remembering, I am sure you could do more with it than others could; and you would lead your little ones, when the Gods have given you any, to come and see it, and tell them many things of old Demophile."

I assured her that, if I outlived her, I would prove, in the manner she wished, that my memory and love outlived her likewise.

She died two days afterward.

Nothing is difficult, not even an epitaph, if we prefer the thoughts that come without calling, and receive the first as the best and truest. I would not close my eyes to sleep until I had performed my promise.

Demophile rests here: we will not say
That she was aged, lest ye turn away;
Nor that she long had suffered: early woes
Alone can touch you; go, and pity those!

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CI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Ah poor Demophile! she remembered me then! How sorry I am I can not tell her I remember her!

Cleone! there are little things that leave no little regrets. I might have said kind words, and perhaps have done kind actions, to many who now are beyond the reach of them. One look on the unfortunate might have given a day's happiness; one sigh over the pillow of sickness might have insured a night's repose; one whisper might have driven from their victim the furies of despair.

We think too much upon *what* the Gods have given us, and too little *why*.

We both are young; and yet we have seen several who loved us pass away; and we never can live over again as we lived before. A portion of our lives is consumed by the torch we follow at their funerals. We enter into another state of existence, resembling indeed and partaking of the former, but another! it contains the substance of the same sorrows, the shadow of the same joys. Alas! how true are the words of the old poet.

> We lose a life in every friend we lose,
> And every death is painful but the last.

I often think of my beautiful nurse, Myrtale, now married very happily in Clazomenai. My first verses were upon her. These are the verses I thought so good, that I wrote a long dissertation on the trochaic metre, to prove it the most magnificent of metres; and I mentioned in it all the poets that ever wrote, from epigrammatic to epic, praising some and censuring others, a judge without appeal upon all.

How you laughed at me! Do you remember the lines? I wonder they are not worse than they are.

> Myrtale! may heaven reward thee
> For thy tenderness and care!
> Dressing me in all thy virtues,
> Docile, duteous, gentle, fair.
>
> One alone thou never heededst,
> I can boast that one alone;
> Grateful beats the heart thy nurseling,
> Myrtale! 'tis all thy own.

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CII. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Receive old Lycoris, and treat her affably. She has much influence in her tribe. The elderly of your sex possess no small authority in our city, and I suspect that in others too they have their sway. She made me tremble once. Philotas asked her how she liked my speech, I forget upon what occasion: she answered,

"His words are current words, and ring well; but unless he gives us more of them for the trouble of our attendance, he shall not be archon, I promise him."

Now I know not how long I could protract a speech, nor how long I could keep my head under water: these are accomplishments I have never studied. Lycoris and I are still friends however. In my favour she has waved her promise, and lets me be an archon.*

CIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

It is difficult and unsafe to pick up a pearl dropped by Alcman. Usually it is moist with the salt of its habitation; and something not quite cleanly may be found adhering to it. Here however is one which even my chaste Cleone may look down on with complacency.

"So pure my love is, I could light
The torch on Aglae's wedding-night,
Nor bend its flame with sighs,
See, from beneath, her chamber-door
Unclose, and bridemaids trip before,
With undejected eyes."

Cupid stood near and heard this said,
And full of malice shook his head,
Then cried, "I'll trust him when he swears
He can not mount the first three stairs;
Even then I'll take one look below
And see with my own eyes 'tis so."

And even Mimnermus, who bears but an indifferent character with the chaste, is irreproachable in those verses, which he appears to have written in the decline of life.

Love ran with me, then walk'd, then sate,
Then said, "*Come, come! it grows too late:*"
And then he would have gone . . but . . no . .
You caught his eye; he could not go.

* Plutarch says he never was archon; he means, perhaps, *first* archon.

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CIV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Send me a note whenever you are idle and thinking of me, dear Aspasia! Send it always by some old slave, ill-dressed. The people will think it a petition, or something as good, and they will be sure to observe the pleasure it throws into my countenance. Two winds at once will blow into my sails, each helping me onward.

If I am tired, your letter will refresh me; if occupied, it will give me activity. Beside, what a deal of time we lose in business!

CV. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Would to heaven, O Pericles! you had no business at all, but the conversation of your friends. You must always be the greatest man in the city, whoever may be the most popular. I wish we could spend the whole day together; must it never be? Are you not already in possession of all you ever contended for?

It is time, methinks, that you should leave off speaking in public, for you begin to be negligent and incorrect. I am to write you a note whenever I am idle and thinking of you!

Pericles! Pericles! how far is it from idleness to think of you! We come to rest before we come to idleness.

CVI. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

In our republic it is no easy thing to obtain an act of divorce from power. It usually is delivered to us by the messager of Death, or presented in due form by our judges where the oyster keeps open house.

Now, oysters are quite out of season in the summer of life; and life, just about this time, I do assure you, is often worth keeping. I thought so even before I knew you, when I thought but little about the matter. It is a casket not precious in itself, but valuable in proportion to what Fortune, or Industry, or Virtue, has placed within it.

CVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

When Pericles is too grave and silent, I usually take up my harp and sing to it; for music is often acceptable to the ear when it would avoid or repose from discourse. He tells me that it not only excites the imagination, but invigorates eloquence and refreshes memory: that playing on my harp to him is like besprinkling a tessellated pave-

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ment with odoriferous water, which brings out the images, cools the apartment, and gratifies the senses by its fragrance.

"That instrument," said he, "is the rod of Hermes; it calls up the spirits from below, or conducts them back again to Elysium. With what ecstasy do I throb and quiver under those refreshing showers of sound!"

Come sprinkle me soft music o'er the breast,
Bring me the varied colours into light
That now obscurely on its tablet rest,
Show me its flowers and figures fresh and bright.

Waked at thy voice and touch, again the chords
Restore what restless years had moved away,
Restore the glowing cheeks, the tender words,
Youth's short-lived spring and Pleasure's summer-day.

I believe he composed these verses while I was playing, although he disowns them, asking me whether I am willing to imagine that my execution is become so powerless.

You remember my old song: it was this I had been playing:

The reeds were green the other day,
Among the reeds we loved to play,
We loved to play while they were green.
The reeds are hard and yellow now,
No more their tufted heads they bow
To beckon us behind the scene.

"What is it like?" my mother said,
And laid her hand upon my head;
"Mother! I can not tell indeed.
I've thought of all hard things I know,
I've thought of all the yellow too;
It only can be like the reed."

CVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Panenos is our best painter: he was educated by Pheidias, who excels all the painters in correctness of design. Panenos has travelled into Egypt, in which country, he tells us, the colours are as fresh upon the walls of the temples as when they were painted, two thousand years ago. Pericles wishes to have a representation of me in the beginning of every Olympiad. Alas! what an imprudence! The most youthful lover never committed one greater.

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I will not send a stranger to you, Cleone! I will send the fugitive of Miletus when Epimedea was giving her the lecture in the bath. Be quiet now; say nothing: even the bath itself is quite imaginary.

Panenos plays upon the harp. I praised him for the simplicity and melody of the tune, and for his execution. He was but little pleased.

"Lady," said he to me, "a painter can be two things; he can be painter and statuary, which is much the easier: make him a third, and you reduce him to nothing."

"Yet Pericles," said I, "plays rather well."

"*Rather well*, I can believe," said he, "because I know that his master was Damon, who was very skilful and very diligent. Damon, like every clever composer I have met with, or indeed ever heard of, was a child in levity and dissipation. His life was half feast, half concert."

"But, Panenos," said I, "surely we may be fond of music, and yet stand a little on this side of idiocy."

"Aspasia!" he replied, "he who loves not music is a beast of one species; he who overloves it is a beast of another, whose brain is smaller than a nightingale's, and his heart than a lizard's. Record me one memorable saying, one witticism, one just remark, of any great musician, and I consent to undergo the punishment of Marsyas. Some among them are innocent and worthy men; not many, nor the first. Dissipation, and, what is strange, selfishness, and disregard to punctuality in engagements, are common and nearly general in the more distinguished of them.

"O Music! how it grieves me, that imprudence, intemperance, gluttony, should open their channels into thy sacred stream!"

Panenos said this: let us never believe a word of it. He himself plays admirably, although no composer.

CIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

O Aspasia! have you heard (you surely must) that the people of Samos have declared war against us? It is hardly sixty years since our beautiful city was captured and destroyed by the Persians. In vain hath she risen from her ashes with fresh splendour! Another Phrynicus will have perhaps to write another tragedy upon us.

Is it an offence to be flourishing and happy?

The unfortunate meet and embrace: the fortunate meet and tear

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each other to pieces. What wonder that the righteous Gods allow to prosperity so brief a space!

CX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Be composed and tranquil: read the speech of Pericles to the Athenians.

SPEECH OF PERICLES.

The Milesians, it appears, have sent embassadors to you, O men of Athens! not entreating the co-operation of your arms, but the interposition of your wisdom and integrity. They have not spoken, nor indeed can they deem it necessary to speak, of dangers recently undergone together with you, of ancient, faithful, indissoluble alliances, or the glory of descending from the same forefathers. On this plea Miletus might have claimed as a right what she solicits as a favour.

Samos, O Athenians, has dared to declare war against the people of Miletus. She envies us our commerce, and, unable to find a plea for assailing us, strikes our friend in our sight, and looks impudently in our faces to see whether we will resent it.

No, Athenians, we will not resent it, until we have sent embassadors, to ask her why she has taken up arms against the peaceful and unoffending? It were well were it permitted us to abstain. Yes, I feel I am hazarding your favour by recommending delay and procrastination: but I do not apprehend that we are losing much time. We have weapons, we have ships, we have the same soldiers who quelled braver enemies. The vanquished seem again to be filling up the ranks we have thinned. They murmur, they threaten, they conspire, they prepare (and preparation denounces it) hostility. Let them come forth against us. Wealth rises up to our succour in that harbour: Glory stands firm and bids them defiance on those walls.

Wait, wait! twenty days only. Ten. Not ten?

Little becomes it me, O Athenians! to oppose your wishes or to abate your ardour.

Depart, then, heralds! and carry with you war.

CXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I have asked Pericles to let me see all his speeches. He declared to me that he has kept no copies, but promised that he would attempt

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to recover some of them from his friends. I was disappointed and grieved, and told him I was angry with him. He answered thus, taking me by the hand,

"So, you really are angry that I have been negligent in the preservation of my speeches, after all my labour in modelling and correcting them. You are anxious that I should be praised as a writer, by writers who direct the public in these matters. Aspasia! I know their value. Understand me correctly and comprehensively. I mean partly the intrinsic worth of their commendations, and partly (as we pay in the price of our utensils) the fashion. I have been accused of squandering away both the public money and my own: nobody shall ever accuse me of paying three obols for the most grandly embossed and most sonorous panegyric. I would excite the pleasure (it were too much to say the admiration) of judicious and thoughtful men; but I would neither soothe nor irritate these busybodies. I have neither honey nor lime for ants. We know that good writers are often gratified by the commendation of bad ones; and that even when the learned and intelligent have brought the materials to crown their merits, they have looked toward the door at some petulant smirking page, for the thread that was to bind the chaplet. Little do I wish to hear what I am, much less what I am not. Enough for me to feel the consciousness and effect of health and strength: surely it is better than to be told by those who salute me, that I am looking very well.

"You may reply that the question turns not upon compliments, but upon censure.

"Really I know not what my censurers may write, never having had the advantage of reading their lucubrations; all I know is this; if I am not *their* Pericles, I am at least the Pericles of Aspasia and the Athenians."

CXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

We were conversing on oratory and orators, when Anaxagoras said, looking at Pericles and smiling,

"They are described by Hesiod in two verses, which he applies to himself and the poets:

> Lies very like the truth we tell,
> And, when we wish it, truth as well.

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Meton relaxed from his usual seriousness, but had no suspicion of the application, saying,

"Cleverly applied indeed!"

Pericles enjoyed equally the simplicity of Meton and the slyness of Anaxagoras, and said,

"Meton! our friend Anaxagoras is so modest a man, that the least we can do for him is to acknowledge his claims as heir general to Hesiod: see them registered."

I have never observed the temper of Pericles either above or below the enjoyment of a joke; he invites and retaliates, but never begins, lest he should appear to take a liberty.

There are proud men of so much delicacy that it almost conceals their pride, and perfectly excuses it.

Meton never talks, but answers questions with great politeness, although with less clearness and precision than you would expect. I remarked to him, one evening, that mathematicians had great advantages over others in disputation, from the habitude they had acquired of exactness in solving their problems.

"We mathematicians," answered he, "lay claim to this precision. I need not mention to you, Aspasia, that of all the people who assemble at your house, I am the only one that ever wants a thought or word. We are exact in our own proper workmanship. Give us time, and we can discover what is false in logic; but I never was acquainted with a mathematican who was ready at correcting in himself a flaw of ratiocination, or who produced the fitting thing in any moderate time. Composition is quite beyond our sphere. I am not envious of others; but I often regret in myself that, while they are delivering their opinions freely and easily, I am arranging mine; and that, in common with all the mathematicians of my acquaintance, I am no prompt debater, no acute logician, no clear expositor, but begin in hesitation and finish in confusion."

I assure you, Cleone, I have been obliged to give order and regularity to these few words of the wise contemplative Meton, and to remove from among them many that were superfluous and repeated. When he had paused, I told him I sometimes wished he would exercise his powerful mind in conversation.

"I have hardly time," said he, "for study, much less for disputation. Rarely have I known a disputant who, however dexterous, did not either drive by Truth or over her, or who stopped to salute her,

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unless he had something fine or novel to display. He would stumble over my cubes and spheres, and I should leave my leg in his noose."

"And yet Anaxagoras and you agree well together," said I.

"Anaxagoras," replied he, "usually asks me short questions, and helps me himself to explain them. He comes to me when I am alone, and would find no pleasure in showing to others my perplexity. Seldom do I let him go again, until he has given me some help or some incitement in my studies. He suggests many things."

"Silence, good Meton!" cried Anaxagoras, "or I may begin to talk of a luminary whose light has not yet reached the earth."

The three men smiled: they have some meaning uncommunicated to me. Perhaps it is a remark of Pericles, in encouragement of Anaxagoras, that, while others pass before us like a half-obol tow-link across a dark alley, and dazzle and disappear, his loftier light has not yet come down to the intellects of his fellow-citizens; or perhaps it may really have a reference to some discovery in astronomy.

Pericles goes in person to command the expedition against Samos. He promises me it will soon be ready to sail, and tells me to expect him back again within a few months. Artemon is preparing machines of great magnitude for the attack of the city. He teaches me that the Samians are brave and wealthy, and that no city is capable of such a resistance. Certainly never were such preparations. I hope at least that the report of them will detain your enemies at home, and at all events that, before they land, you will leave Miletus and come to me. The war is very popular at Athens: I dare say it is equally so at Samos, equally so at Miletus. Nothing pleases men like renewing their ancient alliance with the brutes, and breaking off the more recent one with their fellow creatures.

War is it, O grave heads! that ye
With stern and stately pomp decree?
Inviting all the Gods from far
To join you in the game of war!
Have ye then lived so many years
To find no purer joy than tears?
And seek ye now the highest good
In strife, in anguish, and in blood?
Your wisdom may be more than ours,
But you have spent your golden hours,
And have methinks but little right
To make the happier fret and fight.

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Ah! when will come the calmer day
When these dark clouds shall pass away?
When (should two cities disagree)
The young, the beauteous, and the free,
Rushing with all their force, shall meet
And struggle with embraces sweet,
Till they who may have suffer'd most
Give in, and own the battle lost.

Philosophy does not always play fair with us. She often eludes us when she has invited us, and leaves us when she has led us the farthest way from home. Perhaps it is because we have jumped up from our seats at the first lesson she would give us, and the easiest, and the best. There are few words in the precept,

Give pleasure: receive it:
Avoid giving pain: avoid receiving it.

For the duller scholar, who may find it difficult to learn the whole, she cuts each line in the middle, and tells him kindly that it will serve the purpose, if he will but keep it in his memory.

CXIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Will you never be serious, even upon the most serious occasions? There are so many Grecian states, on both continents and in the islands, that surely some could always be found both willing and proper to arbitrate on any dissension. If litigations are decided by arbiters when two men contend (as they often are) surely it would be an easier matter with cities and communities; for they are not liable to the irritation arising from violent words, nor to the hatred that springs up afresh between two men who strive for property, every time they come within sight. I believe the Greeks are the happiest people upon earth, or that ever are likely to exist upon it; and chiefly from their separation into small communities, independent governments, and laws made by the people for the people! But unless they come to the determination that no war whatever shall be undertaken until the causes of quarrel are examined, and the conditions of accommodation are proposed by others, from whom impartiality is most reasonably to be expected, they will exist without enjoying the greatest advantage that the Gods have offered them. Religious men, I foresee, will be sorry to displease the God of

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battles. Let him have all the kingdoms of the world to himself, but I wish he would resign to the quieter Deities our little Greece.

Preparations are going on here for resistance to the Samians, and we hear that Athenian ships are cruizing off their island.

In case of necessity, everything is ready for my departure to the sources of the Mæander. I will prove to you that I am not hurried nor frightened; I have leisure to write out what perhaps may be the last verses written in Miletus, unless we are relieved.

LITTLE AGLAE,

To her Father, on her Statue being called like her.

Father! the little girl we see
Is not, I fancy, so like me;
You never hold her on your knee.

When she came home the other day
You kiss'd her; but I can not say
She kiss'd you first and ran away.

CXIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Herodotus, on returning from his victory at the Olympian games, was the guest of Pericles. You saw him afterward; and he might have told you that Pericles was urgent with him to remain at Athens. True, as a stranger, he would have been without influence here in political affairs. It is evident that he desires no such thing, but prefers, as literary men should always do, tranquillity and retirement. These he may enjoy in perfection where he is, and write the truth intrepidly. Pericles has more than once heard from him. Life passes in no part of the world so easily and placidly as among the Grecian colonies in Italy. They rarely quarrel; they have room enough, men enough, wealth enough, and not too much. One petty tyrant has sprung up among them lately, and has imprisoned, exiled, and murdered, the best citizens.

Pericles was asked his advice what should be done with him. He answered,

"I never interfere in the affairs of others. It appears to me that, where you have nothing but a weazel to hunt, you should not bring many dogs into the field, nor great ones; but in fact the ratcatcher is the best counsellor on these occasions: he neither makes waste nor noise."

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The tyrant, we hear, is sickening, and many epitaphs are already composed for him; the shortest is,

> The pigmy despot Mutinas lies here;
> He was not godless; no; his God was Fear.

Herodotus tells us, that throughout the lower Italy poverty is unknown; every town well governed, every field well ploughed, every meadow well irrigated, every vineyard pruned scientifically. The people choose their higher magistrates from the most intelligent, provided they are not needy. The only offices that are salaried are the lower, which all the citizens have an equal chance of attaining; some by lot, some by suffrage. This is the secret why the governments are peaceful and durable. No rich man can become the richer for them: every poor man may, but honestly and carefully.

CXV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Corinna was honoured in her native place as greatly as abroad. This is the privilege of our sex. Pindar and Æschylus left their country, not because the lower orders were indifferent or unjust to them, but because those who were born their equals could not endure to see them rise their superiors.

What a war against the Gods is this!

It seems as if it were decreed by a public edict, that no one shall receive from them any gift above a certain value; and that, if they do receive it, they shall be permitted to return the Gods no thanks for it in their native city.

So then! republics must produce genius, and kings reward it!

So then! Hiero and Archelaüs must be elevated to the rank of Cimon and Pericles! O shame! O ignominy!

What afflicts me deeply is the intelligence we receive that Herodotus has left Ionia. He was crowned at the Olympian games; he was invited to a public festival in every city he visited throughout the whole extent of Greece; even his own was pleased with him: yet he too has departed; not to Archelaüs or to Hiero, but to the retirement and tranquillity of Italy.

I do believe, Aspasia, that studious men, who look so quiet, are the most restless men in existence.

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ORATION OF PERICLES TO THE SOLDIERS ROUND SAMOS.

Little time is now left us, O Athenians, between the consideration and the accomplishment of our duties. The justice of the cause, when it was first submitted to your decision in the Agora, was acknowledged with acclamations; the success of it you have insured by your irresistible energy. The port of Samos is in our possession, and we have occupied all the eminences round her walls. Patience is now as requisite to us as to the enemy: for, although every city which can be surrounded, can be captured, yet in some, where courage and numbers have been insufficient to drive off the besieger, Nature and Art may have thrown up obstacles to impede his progress. Such is Samos; the strongest fortress in Europe, excepting only Byzantion. But Bazantion fell before our fathers; and unless she become less deaf to the reclamations of honour, less indifferent to the sanctitude of treaties, unless she prefer her fellow-soldiers to her common enemy, freedom to aristocracy, friends to strangers, Greeks to Asiatics, she shall abase her Thracian fierceness before *us*. However, we will neither spurn the suppliant nor punish the repentant: our arms we will turn for ever, as we turn them now, against the malicious rival, the alienated relative, the apostate confederate, and the proud oppressor. Where a sense of dignity is faint and feeble, and where reason hath lain unexercised and inert, many nations have occasionally been happy and even flourishing under kings: but oligarchy hath ever been a curse to all, from its commencement to its close. To remove it eternally from the vicinity of Miletus, and from the well-disposed of that very city by which hostilities are denounced against her, is at once our interest and our duty. For oligarchs in every part of the world are necessarily our enemies, since we have already shown our fixed determination to aid and support with all our strength the defenders of civility and freedom. It is not in our power (for against our institutions and consciences we Athenians can do nothing), it is not in our power, I repeat it, to sit idly by, while those who were our fellow-combatants against the Persian, and who suffered from his aggression even more than we did, are assailed by degenerate Ionians, whose usurpation rests on Persia. We have enemies wherever there is injustice done to Greeks; and we will abolish that injustice, and we will quell those enemies. Wherever there are equal laws we have friends; and those friends we will

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succour, and those laws we will maintain. On which side do the considerate and religious look forward to the countenance of the Gods? Often have they deferred indeed their righteous judgments, but never have they deserted the long-suffering and the brave. Upon the ground where we were standing when you last heard my appeal to you, were not Xerxes and his myriads encamped? What drove them from it? The wisdom, force, and fortitude, breathed into your hearts by the immortal Gods. Preserve them with equal constancy; and your return, I promise you, shall not have been more glorious from Salamis than from Samos.

CXVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I must always send you poetry when I find it, whether in a greater quantity or a smaller: not indeed all I happen to find; for certainly the most-part even of careful collections is mere trash. If there is a word too much in sense or sentiment, it is no poem; just as, if there is a syllable in a verse too much, it is no metre. I speak only of these shorter; not of those which are long enough to stretch ourselves on and sleep in. But there are poetical cooks so skilful in dividing the tendons of their cub-fed animals, that they contrive to fill a capacious dish with a few couples of the most meagre and tottering. From Athens you shall have nothing that is not attic. I wish I could always give you the names of the authors.

Look at that fountain! Gods around
Sit and enjoy its liquid sound.
Come, come: why should not we draw near?
Let them look on: they can not hear.
But if they envy what we do,
Say, have not Gods been happy too?

The following were composed on a picture in which Cupid is represented tearing a rose-bud.

Ah Cupid! Cupid! let alone
That bud above the rest:
The Graces wear it in their zone,
Thy mother on her breast.
Does it not grieve thee to destroy
So beautiful a flower?
If thou must do it, cruel boy,
Far distant be the hour!

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If the sweet bloom (so tinged with fire
From thy own torch) must die,
Let it, O generous Love! expire
Beneath a lover's sigh.

The next is, *A Faun to Eriopis*, a Wood-nymph, who had permitted a kiss, and was sorry for it.

Tell me, Eriopis, why
Lies in shade that languid eye?
Hast thou caught the hunter's shout
Far from Dian, and without
Any sister nymph to say
Whither leads the downward way?
Trust me: never be afraid
Of thy Faun, my little maid!
He will never call thee *Dear*,
Press thy finger, pinch thy ear,
To admire it overspread
Swiftly with pellucid red,
Nor shall broad and slender feet
Under fruit-laid table meet.
Doth not he already know
All thy wandering, all thy woe?
Come! to weep is now in vain,
I will lead thee back again.
Slight and harmless was the slip
That but soil'd the sadden'd lip.
Now the place is shown to me
Peace and safety shall there be.

CXVII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Samos has fallen. Pericles will have given you this information long before my letter can reach you, and perhaps the joy of the light-hearted Athenians will be over ere then. So soon dies away the satisfaction of great exploits, even of such as have swept a generation from before us, have changed the fortunes of a thousand more, and indeed have shaken the last link in the remotest. We hear, but perhaps the estimate is exaggerated, that the walls of Miletus, of Ephesus, of Priene, are in comparison to Samos as the fences of a farm-yard are to them. Certain it is that the vanquished fleet was more formidable than the united navies of Corinth and of Carthage, which are rated as next in force to the Athenian.

By this conquest we are delivered from imminent danger; yet, I

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am ashamed to say it, our citizens are ungrateful already. It is by the exertions of the Athenians that they are not slaves; and they reason as basely as if they were. They pretend to say that it was jealousy of Samos, and the sudden and vast increase of her maritime power, but by no means any affection for Miletus, which induced them to take up arms! Athens had just reason for hostility; why should she urge, in preference, unjust ones? Alas! if equity is supported by violence, little can be the wonder if power be preceded by falsehood. Such a reflection may be womanish; but are not all peculiarly so which are quiet, compassionate, and consistent? The manly mind, in its continual course of impediments and cataracts, receives and gives few true images; our stagnant life in this respect has greatly the advantage.

Xanthus, the friend (you remember) of poor Xeniades, fought as a volunteer in the Athenian army, and was entrusted with the despatches to our government.

"Xanthus!" said the general, "your countrymen will hereafter read your name, although it is not written here; for we conquerors of Samos are no little jealous one of another. Go and congratulate the Milesians: they will understand us both."

I asked him many questions. He replied with much simplicity, "I was always too much in it to know anything about it. The principal thing I remember is, that Pericles (I was told) smiled at me for a moment in the heat of battle, and went on to another detachment."

CXVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The wind, I understand, has delayed my last letter in harbour, and continues adverse. Every day we receive some fresh vessel from Samos, and some new intelligence. True is it, we discover, that the prevailing party had been supported at once by the Peloponnesians and the Persians. The chastisement of the delinquents is represented as much too mild. "They would have made us slaves, let us make them so." Such, with scourges and tortures, were the denunciations of the people and the soldiery; and more vehemently in Samos than in Miletus. The leaders of the oligarchy (now supprest for ever) were two men of low extraction, Lysimachus and Elpenor. We daily hear some story, well known in Samos only, of these incendiaries. Lysimachus was enriched by the collocation of

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his wife with an old dotard, worn out by gluttony and disordered in intellect. By his last testament, made when he had lost his senses, he bequeathed her fifty talents. The heirs refused to pay them; and Lysimachus would have pleaded her cause before the people, had they not driven him away with shouts and stones. Nevertheless, he was thought a worthy champion of the faction, and the rather as his hatred of his fellow-citizens and former companions must be sincere and inextinguishable. Elpenor is far advanced in age. His elder son was wounded by accident, and died within the walls. Avarice and parsimony had always been his characteristics, under the veil however of morality and religion. The speech he made at the funeral is thus reported,

"It hath been, O men of Samos! the decree of the immortal Gods, whose names be ever blessed! . .

"Hold hard there! Can not you see that there are no more sparks in the pyre? . . the wine smells sadly . . throw no more on them . . take it home to the cellar . .

"To remove from my aged eyes, from my frail embraces, the delight of my life, the staff of my declining years, all spent in the service of my beloved country. It is true I have another son, rising out of his adolescence . . here beside me . .

"O my child! Molismogis! Molismogis! on such a melancholy occasion dost thou, alas! tie indissolubly and wastefully that beautiful piece of packthread? Thy poor bereaved mother may want it; and it will fail her in the hour of need."

Two torches were borne before the funeral. One of them presently gave signs rather prematurely emblematical of our mortal state, and could be restored to its functions by no exertion of the bearer, first waving it gently toward its companion, then shaking it with all his might, horizontally, vertically, diagonally, then holding it down despondingly to the earth. Elpenor beckoned to him, and asked him in his ear how much he had paid for it.

"Half a drachma."

"Fraud!" cried Elpenor, "fraud, even at the tomb! before the dead, and before the Gods of the dead! From whom did you make the purchase?"

"From Gylippides son of Agoracles."

"Tell Gylippides son of Agoracles," calmly said Elpenor, "that in my love of equity, in my duty to the state, in my piety to the Gods,

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in my pure desire to preserve the tranquillity of his conscience, I cite him before the tribunal unless he refund an obol." Then aloud, "It was not in this manner, O Athenians! that our forefathers reverenced the dead."

He gave way under his grief, and was carried back with little commiseration. Elpenor is among the richest men in Greece, unless the conquerors have curtailed his treasures. It is but reasonable that everything such men possess should compensate the people for years of rapine, disunion, and turbulence; for the evil laws they enacted, and for the better they misadministered and perverted.

CXIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Worse verses, it may be, than any of those which you lately sent to me, affect me more. There is no giddiness in looking down the precipices of youth: it is the rapidity and heat of its course that brings the giddiness. When we are near its termination a chilly thrill comes over us, whether we look before or behind. Yet there is something like enchantment in the very sound of the word *youth*, and the calmest heart, at every season of life, beats in double time to it. Never expect a compensation for what you send me, whether prose or poetry: but expect a pleasure, because it has given me one. Now here are the worse verses for the better, the Milesian for the Attic.

We mind not how the sun in the mid-sky
Is hastening on; but when the golden orb
Strikes the extreme of earth, and when the gulphs
Of air and ocean open to receive him,
Dampness and gloom invade us; then we think
Ah! thus is it with Youth. Too fast his feet
Run on for sight; hour follows hour; fair maid
Succeeds fair maid; bright eyes bestar his couch;
The cheerful horn awakens him; the feast,
The revel, the entangling dance, allure,
And voices mellower than the Muse's own
Heave up his buoyant bosom on their wave.
A little while, and then . . Ah Youth! dear Youth!
Listen not to my words . . but stay with me!
When thou art gone, Life may go too; the sigh
That follows is for thee, and not for Life.

CXX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Enough, enough is it for me to see my Pericles safe at home again. Not a word has he spoken, not a question have I asked him, about

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the odious war of Samos. He made in Samos, I hear, a most impressive oration, to celebrate the obsequies of these brave soldiers who fell. In Athens, where all is exultation, he has rendered the slain the most glorious and triumphant, and the fatherless the proudest, of the living. But at last how little worth is the praise of eloquence! Elpenor and Lysimachus lead councils and nations! Great Gods! surely ye must pity us when we worship you; we, who obey, and appear to reverence, the vilest of our species! I recover my step; I will not again slip into this offal. Come, and away to Xanthus. Ay, ay, Cleone! Simplicity, bravery, well-merited and well-borne distinction! Take him, take him: we must not all be cruel . . to ourselves.

CXXI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! you mistake. Grant me the presence of friendship and the memory of love! It is only in this condition that a woman can be secure from fears and other weaknesses. I may admire Xanthus; and there is pleasure in admiration. If I thought I could love him, I should begin to distrust and despise myself. I would not desecrate my heart, even were it in ruins; but I am happy, very happy; not indeed altogether as I was in early youth: perhaps it was youth itself that occasioned it. Let me think so! Indulge me in the silence and solitude of this one fancy. If there was anything else, how sacred should it ever be to me! Ah yes, there was! and sacred it is, and shall be.

Laodamia saw with gladness, not with passion, a God, conductor of her sole beloved. The shade of Xeniades follows the steps of Xanthus.

CXXII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Parties of pleasure are setting sail, every day almost, for Samos. We begin to be very brave; we women, I mean. I suspect that no few of us take an unworthy delight in the humiliation and misery of the fair Samians. Not having seen, nor intending to see them myself, I can only tell you what I have heard of their calamities.

Loud outcries were raised by the popular orators against such of them as were suspected of favouring the Persian faction, and it was demanded of the judges that they should be deported and exposed for slaves. This menace, you may well imagine, caused great anxiety

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and alarm, even among those who appeared to be quite resigned to such a destiny while the gallant young Athenians were around the walls. But, to be sold! and the Gods alone know to whom! old morose men perhaps, and jealous women! Some suspect it was at the instigation of Pericles that a much severer chastisement has befallen them. They have been condemned to wear the habiliments of Persians. Surely no refinement of cruelty can surpass the decree, by which a Greek woman is divested of that beautiful dress which alone can be called an ornament to the female form. This decree has been carried into execution; and you would pity even the betrayers of their country. Whether in ignorance of what the Persian habit is, or from spite and malice, the Samian ladies are obliged to wear sleeves of sufficient amplitude to conceal a traitor in each; and chains intersecting the forehead with their links and ornaments; and hair not divided along the whole summit of the head, but turned back about the centre, to make them resemble the heads of some poisonous snakes. Furthermore, the dresses are stripped ignominiously off the shoulders, as for some barely conceivable punishment, and fastened round the arms in such a manner that, when they attempt to reach anything, or even to move, they are constrained to shrug and writhe, like the uncleanliest persons. Beside, they are quite at the mercy of any wicked idler in the street, who, by one slight touch, or by treading on the hem, might expose them far more undisguisedly to the gazes of the multitude. This barbarian garb has already had such an effect, that two have cast themselves into the sea; and others have entreated that they may, as was first threatened, rather be sold for slaves.

CXXIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Odious as undoubtedly was the conduct of the Samian oligarchy and priesthood, and liable as are all excesses to a still farther exaggeration in the statement of them, you will hardly believe the effrontery of the successful demagogues. Not contented with undeniable proofs, in regard to the enormous and mismanaged wealth torn away from the priests of Bacchus, they have invented the most improbable falsehood that the malevolence of faction ever cast against the insolence of power. They pretend that certain men, some of ancient family, more of recent, had conspired to transmit the reins of government to their elder sons. Possession for life is

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not long enough! They are not only to pass laws, but (whenever it so pleases) to impede them! They decree that the first-born male is to be the wisest and best of the family, and shall legislate for all Samos! Democracy has just to go one step farther, and to persuade the people (ready at such times to believe anything) that the oligarchy had resolved to render their power hereditary, not only for one generation, but for seven. The nation, so long abused in its understanding, would listen to and believe the report, ignorant that arbitrary power has never been carried to such extravagance even in Persia itself, although it is reported that in India the lower orders of people were hereditarily subject to the domination of a privileged class. But this may be false; and indeed it must be, if what is likewise told us concerning them be true, which is, that they have letters among them.

CXXIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

You have given me in your two last a great deal of curious information, about the discoveries that the demagogues made, or pretended to have made, in Samos. It is credible enough that the oligarchs were desirous of transmitting their authority to their children: but that they believed so implicitly in the infatuation of the citizens, or the immutability of human events, as to expect a continuation of power in the same families for seven generations, is too gross and absurd, even to mislead an insurgent and infuriated populace. He indeed must be composed of mud from the Nile, who can endure with patience this rancorous fabrication. In Egypt, we are told by Herodotus in his *Erato*, that, "the son of a herald is of course a herald; and, if any man hath a louder voice than he, it goes for nothing."

Hereditary heralds are the proper officers of hereditary lawgivers; and both are well worthy of dignity where the deities are cats.

Strange oversight! that no provision should ever have been devised, to ensure in these tutelar and truly household Gods an equal security for lineal succession!

CXXV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Abuses of many kinds, and of great enormity, have been detected by the Samians in their overthrown government. What exasperates the people most, and indeed the most justly, is the discovery that

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the ruling families have grossly abused the temples, to the high displeasure of the Gods. Sacrilege has been carried to such a pitch, that some among them have appointed a relative or dependent to the service of more than one sanctuary. You remember that anciently all the worship of this island was confined to Juno. She displeased the people, I know not upon what occasion, and they suffered the greater part of her fanes to fall in ruins, and transferred the richest of the remainder to the priests of Bacchus. Several of those who had bent the knee before Juno, took up the thyrsus with the same devotion. The people did indeed hope that the poor and needy, and particularly such as had lost their limbs in war, or their parents or their children by shipwreck, would be succoured out of the wealth arising from the domains of the priesthood; and the rather as these domains were bequeathed by religious men, whose whole soul rested upon Juno, and whose bequest was now utterly frustrated, by taking them from the sister of Jupiter and giving them exclusively to his son. Beside, it was recollected by the elderly, that out of these vast possessions aid was afforded to the state when the state required it; and that, wherever there stood one of these temples, hunger and sickness, sorrow and despair, were comforted and assuaged. The people, it appears, derived no advantages from the change, and only grew more dissatisfied and violent; for, if those who had officiated in the temples of Juno were a little more licentious than became the ministers of a Goddess, they did not run into the streets, and through the country places, drunk and armed; nor did they seize upon the grapes because they belonged to Bacchus; nor upon the corn because it is unwholesome to drink wine without bread; nor upon the cattle because man can not live on bread alone. These arguments you may suspect of insufficiency: what then will you think when you hear another reason of theirs, which is, that the nation has no right to take from them what belongs to the Goddess. The people cry, "How then can it belong to you?" Pushed upon this side, they argue that they should not be deprived of their salaries, because they are from land. What! reply the citizens, "Are not gold and silver the products of land also?" But long possession . . . "We will remedy that too, as well as we can." The soldiers and sailors have the most reason to complain, when they see twelve priests in the enjoyment of more salary than seven thousand of the bravest combatants. The military are disbanded

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and deprived of pay at the instant when their services are no longer necessary; yet no part, it appears, of a superfluous and idle priesthood is to be reduced or regulated; on the contrary, it is rapacious and irreligious to take away three temples from a venerable occupant of four. Was ever soldier so impudent as to complain that rations were not allowed him in four detachments of his army? The downfall of the old faction will be of little benefit to Samos, while these insults and iniquities press upon the people. Unless those who are now entrusted with power, resolve to abolish the gross abuses of the priesthood, the wealth of which is greater and worse applied in Samos than it is even in those countries where the priests are sovrans, and venerated as deities, little imports it by whom they are governed, or what Gods they venerate. It is better to be ruled by the kings of Lacedæmon, and wiser to salute in worship the sun of Persia. Never surely will the island be pacified, until what was taken from Juno, shall also be taken from Bacchus, and until the richest priest be reduced in his emoluments far below the level of a polemarc.

CXXVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Those of your letters, my Cleone, which relate to the affairs of Samos, and especially to the priests of Juno and Bacchus, have led me into many reflections. The people of Athens are the most religious of any upon earth; but I doubt whether they are the most just, the most generous, the most kindly. There is not a friend, whatever benefit they may have received from him, whom they would not abandon or denounce, on a suspicion of irreverence to Pallas; and those in general are the most fanatical and furious whom, as Goddess of wisdom, she has least favoured. Your neighbours the Samians are more judicious in their worship of Juno. They know that, as long as Jupiter hath a morsel of ambrosia, she will share it, although he may now and then indulge in a draught of nectar to which her lips have no access. The Samians have discovered that wealth is not a requisite of worship, and that a temple needs not a thousand parasangs of land for its inclosure. If we believed that Gods could be jealous, we might fear that there would be much ill blood between Juno and Bacchus. It is more probable that they will look on calmly, and let their priests fight it out. The Persians in these matters are not quite so silly as we are. Herodotus tells

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that, instead of altars and temples, the verdure of the earth is chosen for their sacrifice; and music and garlands, prayers and thanksgivings, are thought as decent and acceptable as comminations and blood. It does not appear that they are less moral or less religious than those who have twenty Gods, and twenty temples for each. The wiser men in Athens tell us that the vulgar have their prejudices. Where indeed is the person who never has repeated this observation? Yet believe me, Cleone, it is utterly untrue. The vulgar have not *their* prejudices: they have the prejudices of those who ought to remove them if they had any. Interested men give them, not their religion, but clubs and daggers for enforcing it; taking from them, in return, their time, their labour, their benevolence, their understanding, and their wealth. And are such persons to be invested with the authority of lawgivers and the splendour of satraps? The Samians have decided that question. Priests of Bacchus, let them diffuse the liberality and joyousness, and curtail a little from the swaggering stateliness of him whom the poet calls in his dithyrambic,

"The tiger-borne and mortal-mothered God."

CXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Hephæstion, whom I never have mentioned to you, and whom indeed I hardly know by name, is going to Italy, and has written this poem on the eve of his departure. It is said that his verses are deficient in tenderness and amenity. Certain it is that he by no means indulges in the display of them, whatever they may be. When Pericles had read the following, I asked him what he thought of the author. "I think," replied Pericles, "that he will never attempt to deprive me of my popularity."

I am afraid he is an ill-tempered man: yet I hear he has suffered on many occasions, and particularly in regard to his fortune, very great injustice with equally great unconcern. He is never seen in the Agora, nor in the theatre, nor in the temples, nor in any assemblage of the people, nor in any society of the learned; nor has he taken the trouble to enter into a confederacy or strike a bargain, as warier men do, with any praiser; no, not even for the loan of a pair of palms in the Keramicos.

I have now said all I believe you will think it requisite for me to say, on a citizen so obscure, and so indifferent a poet. Yet even he,

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poor man! imagines that his effusions must endure. This is the most poetical thought I can find in him; but perhaps he may have written what is better than my specimen.

THE IAMBICS OF HEPHÆSTION.

Speak not too ill of me, Athenian friends!
Nor ye, Athenian sages, speak too ill!
From others of all tribes am I secure.
I leave your confines: none whom you caress,
Finding me hungry and athirst, shall dip
Into Cephisus the grey bowl to quench
My thirst, or break the horny bread, and scoop
Stiffly around the scanty vase, wherewith
To gather the hard honey at the sides,
And give it me for having heard me sing.
Sages and friends! a better cause remains
For wishing no black sail upon my mast.
'Tis, friends and sages! lest, when other men
Say words a little gentler, ye repent,
Yet be forbidden by stern pride to share
The golden cup of kindness, pushing back
Your seats, and gasping for a draught of scorn.
Alas! shall this too, never lack'd before,
Be, when you most would crave it, out of reach!
Thus on the plank, now Neptune is invoked,
I warn you of your peril: I *must* live,
And ye, O friends! howe'er unwilling, *may*.

CXXVIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! I have many things to say in reply to your last letter.

Believe me, I can take little interest in any ill-tempered man. Hephæstion is this, you tell me, and there is nothing in his *Iambics* to make me doubt it. Neither do they contain, you justly remark, anything so characteristic of a poet as the confidence he expresses that he shall live. All poets, good and bad, are possessed by this confidence; because the minds of them all, however feeble, however incapacious, are carried to the uttermost pitch of enthusiasm. In this dream, they fancy they stand upon the same eminence, or nearly so, and look unto the same distance. But no poet or other writer, supposing him in his senses, could ever think seriously that his works will be eternal; for whatever had a beginning must also have an end; and in this predicament are languages. Like the fowls of the air, they are driven from the plains and take refuge in the

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mountains, until at last they disappear, leaving some few traces, some sounds imperfectly caught up. Highly poetical works, or those in which eloquence is invested with the richest attributes of poetry, are the only ones that can prolong the existence of a dialect. Egypt and Phœnicia and Chaldæa, beyond doubt, contain many treatises on the arts and sciences, although unpublished, and preserved only by the priesthood, or by the descendants of the authors and discoverers. These are certainly to pass away before inventions and improvements more important. But if there is anything of genius in their hymns, fables, or histories, it will remain among them, even when their languages shall have undergone many variations: and afterward, when they are spoken no longer, it will be incorporated with others, and finally be claimed as original and indigenous by nations the most remote and dissimilar. Many streams, whose fountains are now utterly dried up, have flowed from afar to be lost in the ocean of Homer. Our early companions, the animals of good old Æsop, have spoken successively in every learned tongue. And now a few words on that gentlest and most fatherly of masters. Before we teach his fables to children, we should study them attentively ourselves. They were written for the wisest and the most powerful, whose wisdom they might increase, and whose power they might direct. There are many men, of influence and authority, apt enough to take kindly a somewhat sharp bite from a dog or monkey, and to be indignant at the slightest touch on the shoulder from a fellow-creature. It is improbable that a fable will do many of them much good, but it may do a little to one in twenty, and the amount is by no means unimportant in that number of generations. The only use of Æsop to children, after the delight he gives them, is the promotion of familiarity and friendship with animals, in proportion as they appear to deserve it: and a great use indeed it is. If I were not afraid that one or other of these vigilant creatures might snap at me, I would now begin to quarrel a little with you. And yet I think I should have on my side some of the more sagacious, were I to reprehend you for letting an ill-tempered man render you supercilious and unjust. How do you know, pray, that Hephæstion may not live? and quite as long as he fancies he shall; a century, or two, or three. Even in the *Iambics* there is a compression and energy of thought, which the best poets sometimes want; and there is in them as much poetry as was necessary on the occasion. The poet has given us, at

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one stroke, the true impression of a feature in his character; which few have done, and few can do, excepting those features only which are nearly alike in the whole fraternity.

Doubtless we are pleased to take our daily walk by streams that reflect the verdure and the flowers: but the waters of a gloomy cavern may be as pellucid and pure, and more congenial to our graver thoughts and bolder imaginations.

For any high or any wide operation, a poet must be endued, not with passion indeed, but with power and mastery over it; with imagination, with reflection, with observation, and with discernment. There are however some things in poetry which admit few of these qualities. Comedy for instance would evaporate under too fervid a fancy: and the sounds of the Ode would be dulled and deadened by being too closely overarched with the fruitage of reflection. Homer in himself is subject to none of the passions; but he sends them all forth on his errands, with as much precision and velocity as Apollo his golden arrows. The hostile Gods, the very Fates themselves, must have wept with Priam in the tent before Achilles: Homer stands unmoved.

Aspasia! there is every reason why a good-natured person should make us good-natured, but none whatever why an ill-natured one should make us ill-natured: neither of them ought to make us unjust. You do not know Hephæstion, and you speak ill of him on the report of others, who perhaps know him as little as you do. You would shudder if I ventured to show you the position you have taken. Ill-tempered you can not be; you would not be unfair: what if, in the opinion of your friends, you should be a more shocking thing than either! what, in the name of the immortal Gods! if I should have found you, on this one occasion, a somnambulist on the verge of vulgarity! Take courage: nobody has seen it but myself. If there are bad people in the world, and may-be there are plenty, we ought never to let it be thought that we are near enough to be aware of it. Again to Hephæstion. It is better to be austere than ambitious: better to live out of society than to court the worst. How many of the powerful, even within the confines of their own household, will be remembered less affectionately and lastingly than tame sparrows and talking daws! and, among the number of those who are destined to be known hereafter, of how many will the memory be laden with contempt or with execration! To the wealthy, proud, and

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arrogant, the Gods have allotted no longer an existence, than to the utensils in their kitchens, or the vermin in their sewers: while, to those whom such perishables would depress and vilify, the same Eternal Beings have decreed and ratified their own calm consciousness of plastic power, of immovable superiority, with a portion (immeasurably great) of their wisdom, their authority, and their duration.

CXXIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

We have kept your birth-day, Aspasia! On these occasions I am reluctant to write anything. Politeness, I think, and humanity, should always check the precipitancy of congratulation. Nobody is felicitated on losing. Even the loss of a bracelet or tiara is deemed no subject for merriment and alertness in our friends and followers. Surely then the marked and registered loss of an irreparable year, the loss of a limb of life, ought to excite far other sensations. So long is it, O Aspasia! since we have read any poetry together, I am quite uncertain whether you know the Ode to Asteröessa.

Asteröessa! many bring
The vows of verse and blooms of spring
To crown thy natal day.
Lo, *my* vow too amid the rest!
Ne'er mayst thou sigh from that white breast,
"*O take them all away!*"

For there are cares and there are wrongs,
And withering eyes and venom'd tongues;
They now are far behind;
But come they must: and every year
Some flowers decay, some thorns appear,
Whereof these gifts remind.

Cease, raven, cease! nor scare the dove
With croak around and swoop above;
Be peace, be joy, within!
Of all that hail this happy tide
My verse alone be cast aside!
Lyre, cymbal, dance, begin!

Although there must be some myriads of Odes written on the same occasion, yet, among the number on which I can lay my hand, none conveys my own sentiment so completely.

Sweetest Aspasia, live on! live on! but rather, live back the past!

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CXXX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The Hecatompedon, which many of the citizens begin to call the *Parthenon*, is now completed, and waits but for the Goddess. A small temple, raised by Cimon in honour of Theseus, is the model. This until lately was the only beautiful edifice in the Athenian dominions. Pericles is resolved that Athens shall not only be the mistress, but the admiration of the world, and that her architecture shall, if possible, keep pace with her military and intellectual renown. Our countrymen, who have hitherto been better architects than the people of Attica, think it indecorous and degrading that Ionians, as the Athenians are, should follow the fashion of the Dorians, so inferior a race of mortals. Many grand designs were offered by Ictinos to the approbation and choice of the public. Those which he calls Ionian, are the gracefuller. Crateros, a young architect, perhaps to ridicule the finery and extravagance of the Corinthians, exposed to view a gorgeous design of slender columns and top-heavy capitals, such as, if ever carried into execution, would be incapable of resisting the humidity of the sea-breezes, or even the action of the open air, uninfluenced by them. These however would not be misplaced as indoor ornaments, particularly in bronze or ivory; and indeed small pillars of such a character would be suitable enough to highly ornamented apartments. I have conversed on the subject with Ictinos, who remarked to me that what we call the Doric column is in fact Egyptian, modified to the position and the worship; and that our noblest specimens are but reduced and petty imitations of those ancient and indestructible supporters, to the temples of Thebes, of Memphis and of Tentyra. He smiled at the ridicule cast on the Corinthians by the name designating those florid capitals, but agreed with me that, on a smaller scale, in gold or silver, they would serve admirably for the receptacles of wax-lights on solemn festivals. He praised the designs of our Ionian architects, and acknowledged that their pillars alone deserve the appellation of Grecian, but added that, in places liable to earthquakes, inundations, or accumulations of sand, the solider column was in its proper situation. The architraves of the Parthenon are chiselled by the scholars of Pheidias, who sometimes gave a portion of the design. It is reported that two of the figures bear the marks of the master's own hand: he leaves it to the conjecture of future ages which they are. Some of the young

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architects, Ionian and Athenian, who were standing with me, disputed not only on the relative merits of their architecture, but of their dialect. One of them, Psamiades of Ephesus, ill enduring the taunt of Brachys the Athenian, that the Ionian, from its open vowels, resembles a pretty pulpy hand which could not close itself, made an attack on the letter T usurping the place of S, and against the augments.

"Is it not enough," said he, "that you lisp, but you must also stammer?"

Let us have patience if any speak against us, O Cleone! when a censure is cast on the architecture of Ictinos and on the dialect of Athens.

CXXXI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

When the weather is serene and bright, I think of the young Aspasia; of her liveliness, her playfulness, her invitations to sit down on the grass; and her challenges to run, to leap, to dance, and, if nobody was near, to gambol. The weather at this season is neither bright nor serene, and I think the more of my Aspasia, because I want her more. Fie upon me! And yet on the whole,

> Happy to me has been the day,
> The shortest of the year,
> Though some, alas! are far away
> Who made the longest yet more brief appear.

I never was formed for poetry: I hate whatever I have written five minutes afterward. A weakly kid likes the warm milk, and likes the drawing of it from its sources; but place the same before her, cold, in a pail, and she smells at it and turns away.

Among the *Tales* lately come out here, many contain occasional poetry. In the preface to one, the scene of which lies mostly in Athens, the author says,

"My reader will do well to draw his pen across the verses: they are not good for him. The olive, especially the Attic, is pleasing to few the first time it is tasted."

This hath raised an outcry against him; so that of the whole fraternity he is the most unpopular.

"The Gods confound him with his Atticisms!" exclaim the sober-minded. "Is not the man contented to be a true and hearty Carian? Have we not roses and violets, lilies and amaranths, crocuses and

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sowthistles? Have we not pretty girls and loving ones; have we not desperate girls and cruel ones, as abundantly as elsewhere? Do not folks grieve and die to his heart's content? We possess the staple; and by Castor and Pollux! we can bleach it and comb it and twist it, as cleverly as the sharpest of your light-fingered locust-eaters."

You will soon see his works, among others more voluminous. In the meanwhile, I can not end my letter in a pleasanter way than with a copy of these verses, which are nearer to the shortest than to the best.

Perilla! to thy fates resign'd,
Think not what years are gone:
While Atalanta look't behind
The golden fruit roll'd on.

Albeit a mother may have lost
The plaything at her breast,
Albeit the one she cherish't most,
It but endears the rest.

Youth, my Perilla, clings on Hope,
And looks into the skies
For brighter day; she fears to cope
With grief, she shrinks at sighs.

Why should the memory of the past
Make you and me complain?
Come, as we could not hold it fast,
We'll play it o'er again.

CXXXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

There are odes in Alcæus which the pen would stop at, trip at, or leap over. Several in our collection are wanting in yours; this among them:—

Wormwood and rue be on his tongue,
And ashes on his head,
Who chills the feast and checks the song
With emblems of the dead!

By young and jovial, wise and brave,
Such mummers are derided.
His sacred rites shall Bacchus have,
Unspared and undivided.

Couch't by my friends, I fear no mask
Impending from above,
I only fear the later flask
That holds me from my love.

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Show these to any priest of Bacchus, especially to any at Samos, and he will shake his head at you, telling you that Bacchus will never do without his masks and mysteries, which it is holier to fear than the *later flask*. On this subject, he would prove to you, all fears are empty ones.

CXXXIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

In ancient nations there are grand repositories of wisdom, although it may happen that little of it is doled out to the exigencies of the people. There is more in the fables of Æsop than in the schools of our Athenian philosophers: there is more in the laws and usages of Persia, than in the greater part of those communities which are loud in denouncing them for barbarism. And yet there are some that shock me. We are told by Herodotus, who tells us whatever we know with certainty a step beyond our thresholds, that a boy in Persia is kept in the apartments of the women, and prohibited from seeing his father, until the fifth year. The reason is, he informs us, that if he dies before this age, his loss may give the parent no uneasiness. And such a custom he thinks commendable. Herodotus has no child, Cleone! If he had, far other would be his feelings and his judgment. Before that age, how many seeds are sown, which future years, and distant ones, mature successively! How much fondness, how much generosity, what hosts of other virtues, courage, constancy, patriotism, spring into the father's heart from the cradle of his child! And does never the fear come over him, that what is most precious to him upon earth is left in careless or perfidious, in unsafe or unworthy hands? Does it never occur to him that he loses a son in every one of these five years? What is there so affecting to the brave and virtuous man, as that which perpetually wants his help and can not call for it! What is so different as the speaking and the mute! And hardly less so are inarticulate sounds, and sounds which he receives half-formed, and which he delights to modulate, and which he lays with infinite care and patience, not only on the tender attentive ear, but on the half-open lips, and on the eyes, and on the cheeks; as if they all were listeners. In every child there are many children; but coming forth year after year, each somewhat like and somewhat varying. When they are grown much older, the leaves (as it were) lose their pellucid green, the branches their graceful pliancy.

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Is there any man so rich in happiness that he can afford to throw aside these first five years? is there any man who can hope for another five so exuberant in unsating joy?

O my sweet infant! I would teach thee to kneel before the Gods, were it only to thank 'em for being Athenian and not Persian.

CXXXIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Our good Anaxagoras said to me this morning, "You do well, Aspasia, to read history in preference to philosophy, not only on the recommendation but according to the practice of Pericles. A good historian will also be a good philosopher, but will take especial care that he be never caught in the attitude of disquisition or declamation. The golden vein must run through his field, but we must not see rising out of it the shaft and the machinery. We should moderate or repress our curiosity and fastidiousness. Perhaps at no time will there be written, by the most accurate and faithful historian, so much of truth as untruth. But actions enow will come out with sufficient prominence before the great tribunal of mankind, to exercise their judgment and regulate their proceedings. If statesmen looked attentively at everything past, they would find infallible guides in all emergencies. But leaders are apt to shudder at the idea of being led, and little know what different things are experiment and experience. The sagacity of a Pericles himself is neither rule nor authority to those impetuous men, who would rather have rich masters than frugal friends.

"The young folks from the school of your suitor Socrates, who begin to talk already of travelling in Egypt when the plague is over, are likely to return with a distemper as incurable, breaking bulk with demons and dreams. They carry stem and stern too high out of the water, and are more attentive to the bustling and bellying of the streamers, than to the soundness of the mast, the compactness of the deck, or the capacity and cleanliness of the hold."

CXXXV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Anaxagoras told me yesterday that he had been conversing with some literary men, philosophers and poets, who agreed in one thing only, which is, that we are growing worse day after day, both in morality and intellect. Hints were thrown out that philosophy had mistaken her road, and that it was wonderful how she could be at

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once so dull and so mischievous. The philosophers themselves made this complaint: the poets were as severe on poetry, and were amazed that we were reduced so low as to be the hearers of Sophocles and Euripides, and three or four more, who however were quite good enough for such admirers.

"It is strange," said Anaxagoras, "that we are unwilling to receive the higher pleasures, when they come to us and solicit us, and when we are sure they will do us great and lasting good; and that we gape and pant after the lower, when we are equally sure they will do us great and lasting evil. I am incapable," continued he, "of enjoying so much pleasure from the works of imagination as these poets are, who would rather hate Euripides and Sophocles than be delighted by them, yet who follow the shade of Orpheus with as ardent an intensity of love as Orpheus followed the shade of Eurydice. Ignorant as I am of poetry, I dared not hazard the opinion that our two contemporaries were really deserving of more commendation on the score of verse, inferior as they might in originality be to Marsyas and Thamyris and the Centaur Chiron: and to the philosophers I could only say, My dear friends! let us keep our temper firmly and our tenets laxly; and let any man correct both who will take the trouble. I come to you, Aspasia, to console me for the derision I bring home with me."

I kissed his brow, which was never serener, and assured him that he possessed more comfort than any mortal could bestow upon him, and that he was the only one living who never wanted any.

"I am not insensible," said he, "that every year, at my time of life, we lose some pleasure; some twig that once blossomed, cankers."

I never was fond of looking forward: I have invariably checked both hopes and wishes. It is but fair then that I should be allowed to turn away my eyes from the prospect of age: even if I could believe that it would come to me as placidly as it has come to Anaxagoras, I would rather lie down to sleep before the knees tremble as they bend. With Anaxagoras I never converse in this manner; for old men more willingly talk of age than hear others talk of it; and neither fool nor philosopher likes to think of the time when he shall talk no longer. I told my dear old man that, having given a piece of moral to the philosophers, he must not be so unjust as to refuse a like present to the poets. About an hour before I began my letter, he came into the library, and, to my great surprise, brought me these verses,

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telling me that, if they were satirical, the satire fell entirely upon himself.

Pleasures! away; they please no more.
Friends! are they what they were before?
Loves! they are very idle things,
The best about them are their wings.
The dance! 'tis what the bear can do;
Music! I hate your music too.

Whene'er these witnesses that Time
Hath snatcht the chaplet from our prime,
Are call'd by Nature, as we go
With eye more wary, step more slow,
And will be heard and noted down,
However we may fret or frown,
Shall we desire to leave the scene
Where all our former joys have been?
No, 'twere ungrateful and unwise!
But when die down our charities
For human weal and human woes,
Then is the time our eyes should close.

CXXXVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

We hear that another state has been rising up gradually to power, in the centre of Italy. It was originally formed of a band of pirates from some distant country, who took possession of two eminences, fortified long before, and overlooking a wide extent of country. Under these eminences, themselves but of little elevation, are five hillocks, on which they inclosed the cattle by night. It is reported that here were the remains of an ancient and extensive city, which served the robbers for hiding-places; and temples were not wanting in which to deprecate the vengeance of the Gods for the violences and murders they committed daily. The situation is unhealthy, which perhaps is the reason why the city was abandoned, and is likewise a sufficient one why it was rebuilt by the present occupants. They might perpetrate what depredations they pleased, confident that no force could long besiege them in a climate so pestilential. Relying on this advantage, they seized from time to time as many women as were requisite for any fresh accession of vagabonds, rogues, and murderers.

The Sabines bore the loss tolerably well, until the Romans (so they call themselves) went beyond all bounds, and even took their

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cattle from the yoke. The Sabines had endured all that it became them to endure; but the lowing of their oxen from the seven hills reached their hearts and inflamed them with revenge. They are a pastoral and therefore a patient people, able to undergo the exertions, and endure the privations of war, but never having been thieves, the Romans over-matched them in vigilance, activity, and enterprise; and have several times since made incursions into their country, and forced them to disadvantageous conditions. Emboldened by success, they ventured to insult and exasperate the nearest of the Tyrrhenian princes.

The Tyrrhenians are a very proud and very ancient nation, and, like all nations that are proud and ancient, excell chiefly in enjoying themselves. Demaratos the Corinthian dwelt among them several years; and from the Corinthians they learnt to improve their pottery, which however it does not appear that they ever have carried to the same perfection as the Corinthian, the best of it being indifferently copied, both in the form and in the figures on it.

Herodotus has written to Pericles all he could collect relating to them; and Pericles says the account is interesting. For my part I could hardly listen to it, although written by Herodotus and read by Pericles. I have quite forgotten the order of events. I think they are such as neither you nor any one else, excepting those who live near them, will ever care about. But the Tyrrhenians really are an extraordinary people. They have no poets, no historians, no orators, no statuaries, no painters: they say they once had them: so much the more disgraceful. The Romans went out against them and dispersed them, although they blew many trumpets bravely, and brought (pretty nearly into action) many stout soothsayers. The enemy, it appears, has treated them with clemency: they may still feed soothsayers, blow horns, and have wives in common.

I hope it is near your bed-time: if it is, you will thank me for my letter.

CXXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Who would have imagined that the grave sedate Pericles could take such delight in mischief! After reading my dissertation on the Tyrrhenians and Romans, he gave it again into my hands, saying,

"Pray amuse your friend Cleone with your first attempt at history."

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I sent it off, quite unsuspicious. In the evening he looked at me with a smile of no short continuance, and said at last,

"Aspasia! I perceive you are emulous of our Halicarnassian; but pray do not publish that historical Essay either in his name or your own. He does not treat the Romans quite so lightly as you do, and shows rather more justice to the Tyrrhenians. You forgot to mention some important facts recorded by him, and some doubts as weighty. We shall come to them presently.

"Having heard of the Romans, but nothing distinctly, I wished to receive a clearer and a fuller account of them, and wrote to Herodotus by the first ship that sailed for Tarentum. The city where he is residing lies near it, and I gave orders that my letter should be taken thither, and delivered into his hands. Above a year is elapsed, during which time Herodotus tells me he has made all the inquiries which the pursuit of his studies would allow; that he is continuing to correct the errors, elucidate the doubtful points, and correct the style and arrangement of his history; and that, when he has completed it to his mind, he shall have time and curiosity to consider with some attention this remarkable tribe of barbarians.

"At present he has not been able to answer my questions; for never was writer so sedulous in the pursuit and examination of facts. What he sees, he describes clearly; what he hears, he relates faithfully; and he bestows the same care on the composition as he had bestowed on the investigation.

"The Romans I imagined had been subdued by Numa, a Sabine; for it can hardly be credited that so ferocious a community sent a friendly invitation to be governed and commanded by the prince of a people they had grossly and repeatedly insulted. What services had he rendered them? or by what means had they become acquainted with his aptitude for government? They had ever been rude and quarrelsome: he was distinguished for civility and gentleness. They had violated all that is most sacred in public and private life: virgins were seized by treachery, detained by force, and compelled to wipe the blood of their fathers off the sword of their ravishers. A fratricide king had recently been murdered by a magistracy of traitors. What man in his senses would change any condition of life to become the ruler of such a nation? None but he who had conquered and could control them: none but one who had swords enough for every head among them. Absolute power alone can tame them and fit

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them for anything better; and this power must reside in the hands of a brave and sagacious man, who will not permit it to be shared, or touched, or questioned. Under such a man such a people may become formidable, virtuous, and great. It is too true that, to be martial, a nation must taste of blood in its cradle. Philosophers may dispute it; but time past has written it down, and time to come will confirm it. Of these matters the sophists can know nothing: he who understands them best will be the least inclined to discourse on them.

"Another thing I doubted, and wished to know. Numa is called a Sabine. The Sabines are illiterate still: in the time of Numa they were ruder; they had no commerce, no communication with countries beyond Italy; and yet there are writers who tell us that he introduced laws, on the whole not dissimilar to ours, and corrected the calendar. Is it credible? Is it possible? I am disposed to believe that both these services were rendered by the son of Demaratos, and that the calendar might have been made better, were it not requisite on such an occasion, more than almost any other, to consult the superstition of the populace.

"I myself am afraid of touching the calendar here in Athens, many as have been my conferences with Meton on the subject. Done it shall be; but it must be either just before a victory or just after.

"If the Sabine had sent an embassy, or even an individual, to Athens, in order to collect our laws, the archives of the city would retain a record of so wonderful an event. He certainly could not have picked them up in the pastures or woodlands of his own country. But the Corinthians know them well, and have copied most of them. All nations are fond of pushing the date of their civilization as high up as possible, and care not how remotely they place the benefits they have received. And probably some of the Romans, aware that Numa was their conqueror, helped to abolish the humiliating suspicion, by investing him successively with the robes of a priest, of a legislator, and of an astronomer.

"His two nearest successors were warriors and conquerors. The third was the son of that Demaratos of whom we have spoken, and who, exiled from Corinth, settled among the Tyrrhenians, and afterward, being rich and eloquent, won over to his interest the discontented and venal of the Romans; at all times the great majority.

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We hear that he constructed of hewn stone a long, a spacious, and a lofty channel, to convey the filth of the town into the river: we hear, at the same time, that the town itself was fabricated of hurdles and mud, upon ruins of massy workmanship; that the best houses were roofed with rushes, and that the vases of the temples were earthen. Now, kings in general, and mostly those whose authority is recent and insecure, think rather of amusing the people by spectacles, or pampering their appetites by feasts and donatives, or dazzling their imagination by pomp and splendour. Theatres, not common sewers, suited best the Romans. Their first great exploit was performed in a theatre, at the cost of the Sabines. Moreover they were religious, and stole every God and Goddess they could lay their hands on. Surely so considerate a person as the son of Demaratos would have adapted his magnificence to the genius of the people, who never cared about filth, but were always most zealous in their devotions. This we might imagine would occur to him as more and more requisite on the capture of every town or village; for, when the Romans had killed the inhabitants, they transferred the Gods very diligently into their city, that they might not miss their worshippers. Now the Gods must have wanted room by degrees, and might not have liked their quarters. Five hundred temples could have been erected at less expense than the building of this stupendous duct. Did the son of Demaratos build it then?

"The people are still ignorant, still barbarous, still cruel, still intractable; but they are acute in the perception of their interests, and have established at last a form of government more resembling the Carthaginian than ours. As their power does not arise from commerce, like the power of Carthage, but strikes its roots into the solid earth, its only sure foundation, it is much less subject to the gusts of fortune, and will recover from a shock more speedily. Neither is there any great nation in contact with them. When they were much weaker, the Tyrrhenians conquered them, under the command of their prince Porsena; but thought they could leave them nowhere less inconveniently than in the place they themselves had abandoned. The Sabines, too, conquered them a second time, and imposed a king over them, but were so unsuspicious and inconsiderate as not to destroy the city, and parcel out the inhabitants for Greece, Sicily, and Africa.

"Living as they did on their farms, with no hold upon the Romans

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but a king, who, residing in the city with few of his own countrymen about him, was rather a hostage than a ruler, his authority was soon subverted. The Sabines at this time are partly won by conquest, and partly domiciliated by consanguinity. The Tyrrhenians are spent and effete. The government of the Romans, from royal, is now become aristocratical; and the people, deprived of their lawful share in the lands they conquered from so many enemies, swear hatred to kings, and sigh for their return. One flagrant crime consumed the regal authority; a thousand smouldering ones eat deep into the consular. The military system stands apart, admirable in its formation; and, unless that too falls, the Roman camps will move forward year after year, until the mountains and the seas of Italy shall not contain them. They are heirs to the wealth of worn-out nations, and, when they have seized upon their inheritance, they will fight with braver. The Romans will be to Italy what the Macedonians at some future day will be to Greece.

"The old must give way to the young, nations like men, and men like leaves."

CXXXVIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Buildings of high antiquity have usually been carried by the imagination much higher still. But, by what we hear of the Tyrrhenians, we may believe that in their country there are remains of earlier times than in ours. Everything about them shows a pampered and dissolute and decaying people.

You will hardly think a sewer a subject for curiosity and investigation: yet nothing in Europe is so vast and so well-constructed as the sewer at Rome, excepting only the harbour walls and propylæa, built recently here at Athens, under the administration of Pericles. I have asked him some further questions on the wonderful work still extant in the city occupied by the Romans. I will now give you his answer.

"Do not imagine that, unable as I am to ascertain the time when the great sewer of Rome was constructed, I am desirous of establishing one opinion in prejudice of another, or forward in denying that a rich Corinthian might have devised so vast an undertaking. But in Corinth herself we find nothing of equal magnitude, nothing at all resembling its architecture: the Tyrrhenians, who are stated to have been employed in building it, have ceased for many ages to

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be capable of anything similar; all their great fabrics may be dated more than a thousand years before the age of Tarquin. I feel no interest in the support of an hypothesis. Take it, or reject it; I would rather that you rejected it, if you would replace it with another and a better. Many things pass across the mind, which are neither to be detained in it with the intention of insisting on them as truths, nor are to be dismissed from it as idle and intrusive. Whatever gives exercise to our thoughts, gives them not only activity and strength, but likewise range. We are not obliged to continue on the training-ground; nor on the other hand is it expedient to obstruct it or plough it up. The hunter, in quest of one species of game, often finds another, and always finds what is better, freshness and earnestness and animation. Were I occupied in literature, I should little fear stumbling in my ascent toward its untrodden and abstruser scenery: being a politician, I know that a single false step is a fall, and a fall is ruin. We may begin wrong, and continue so with impunity; but we must not deviate from wrong to right."

He said this with one of his grave smiles; and then to me,

"A slender shrub, the ornament of your private walk, may with moderate effort be drawn straight again from any obliquity; but such an attempt, were it practicable, would crack every fibre in the twisted tree that overshades the forest."

CXXXIX. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Who told you, Aspasia, that instead of poetry, of history, of philosophy, our writers at Miletus are beginning to compose a species of tales founded on love or madness, and ending in miserable death or wealthy marriage; and that at the conclusion of the work a strict account is rendered of all estrays, of all that had once come into it and had disappeared? Very true, the people at large run after the detail of adventures, and are as anxious to see the termination as they are to reach the bottom of an amphora: but I beseech you never to imagine that we are reduced in our literature to such a state of destitution, as to be without the enjoyment of those treasures which our ancestors left behind them. No, Aspasia, we are not yet so famished that a few morsels of more nutritious food would overpower us. I assure you, we do not desire to see a death or a marriage set upon the table every day. We are grateful for all the exercises and all the excursions of intellect, and our thanks are

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peculiarly due to those by whose genius our pleasure in them is increased or varied. If we have among us any one capable of devising an imaginary tale, wherein all that is interesting in poetry is united with all that is instructive in history, such an author will not supersede the poets and historians, but will walk between them, and be cordially hailed by both.

CXL. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

When we are dull we run to music. I am sure you must be dull enough after so much of history and of politics. My Pericles can discover portents in Macedonia and Italy: Anaximander could see mountains in the moon: I desire to cast my eyes no farther than to Miletus.

Take your harp.

ODE TO MILETUS.

Maiden there was whom Jove
Illuded into love,
Happy and pure was she;
Glorious from her the shore became,
And Helle lifted up her name
To shine eternal o'er the river-sea.

And many tears are shed
Upon thy bridal-bed,
Star of the swimmer in the lonely night!
Who with unbraided hair
Wipedst a breast so fair,
Bounding with toil, more bounding with delight.

But they whose prow hath past thy straits
And, ranged before Byzantion's gates,
Bring to the God of sea the victim due,
Even from the altar raise their eyes,
And drop the chalice with surprise,
And at such grandeur have forgotten you.

At last there swells the hymn of praise,
And who inspires those sacred lays?
"The founder of the walls ye see."
What human power could elevate
Those walls, that citadel, that gate?
"Miletus, O my sons! was he."

Hail then, Miletus! hail beloved town,
Parent of me and mine!

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But let not power alone be thy renown,
Nor chiefs of ancient line,

Nor visits of the Gods, unless
They leave their thoughts below,
And teach us that we most should bless
Those to whom most we owe.

Restless is Wealth; the nerves of Power
Sink, as a lute's in rain:
The Gods lend only for an hour
And then call back again

All else than Wisdom; she alone,
In Truth's or Virtue's form,
Descending from the starry throne
Thro' radiance and thro' storm,

Remains as long as godlike men
Afford her audience meet,
Nor Time nor War tread down again
The traces of her feet.

Always hast thou, Miletus, been the friend,
Protector, guardian, father, of the wise;
Therefore shall thy dominion never end
Till Fame, despoil'd of voice and pinion, dies.

With favouring shouts and flowers thrown fast behind,
Arctinos ran his race,
No wanderer he, alone and blind . .
And Melesander was untorn by Thrace.

There have been, but not here,
Rich men who swept aside the royal feast
On child's or bondman's breast,
Bidding the wise and aged disappear.

Revere the aged and the wise,
Aspasia! but thy sandal is not worn
To trample on these things of scorn;
By his own sting the fire-bound scorpion dies.

CXLI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

To-day there came to visit us a writer who is not yet an author: his name is Thucydides. We understand that he has been these several years engaged in preparation for a history. Pericles invited him to meet Herodotus, when that wonderful man had returned to

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our country, and about to sail from Athens. Until then, it was believed by the intimate friends of Thucydides that he would devote his life to poetry, and such is his vigour both of thought and of expression, that he would have been the rival of Pindar. Even now he is fonder of talking on poetry than any other subject, and blushed when history was mentioned. By degrees however he warmed, and listened with deep interest to the discourse of Pericles on the duties of a historian.

"May our first Athenian historian not be the greatest!" said he, "as the first of our dramatists has been, in the opinion of many. Æschylus was the creator of Tragedy, nor did she ever shine with such splendour, ever move with such stateliness and magnificence, as at her first apparition on the horizon. The verses of Sophocles are more elaborate, the language purer, the sentences fuller and more harmonious; but in loftiness of soul, and in the awfulness with which he invests his characters, Æschylus remains unrivalled and unapproached.

"We are growing too loquacious, both on the stage and off. We make disquisitions which render us only more and more dim-sighted, and excursions that only consume our stores. If some among us who have acquired celebrity by their compositions, calm, candid, contemplative men, were to undertake the history of Athens from the invasion of Xerxes, I should expect a fair and full criticism on the orations of Antiphon, and experience no disappointment at their forgetting the battle of Salamis. History, when she has lost her Muse, will lose her dignity, her occupation, her character, her name. She will wander about the Agora; she will start, she will stop, she will look wild, she will look stupid, she will take languidly to her bosom doubts, queries, essays, dissertations, some of which ought to go before her, some to follow, and all to stand apart. The field of History should not merely be well tilled, but well peopled. None is delightful to me, or interesting, in which I find not as many illustrious names as have a right to enter it. We might as well in a drama place the actors behind the scenes, and listen to the dialogue there, as in a history push valiant men back, and protrude ourselves with husky disputations. Show me rather how great projects were executed, great advantages gained, and great calamities averted. Show me the generals and the statesmen who stood foremost, that I may bend to them in reverence; tell me their names, that I may

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repeat them to my children. Teach me whence laws were introduced, upon what foundation laid, by what custody guarded, in what inner keep preserved. Let the books of the treasury lie closed as religiously as the Sibyl's ; leave weights and measures in the market-place, Commerce in the harbour, the Arts in the light they love, Philosophy in the shade: place History on her rightful throne, and, at the sides of her, Eloquence and War.

"Aspasia ! try your influence over Thucydides: perhaps he would not refuse you the pleasure of hearing a few sentences of the work he has begun. I may be a plagiary if I am a listener, and yet I would request permission to be present."

Thucydides was pleased at this deference, and has promised to return soon.

CXLII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Polynices, a fishmonger, has been introduced upon the stage. He had grown rich by his honesty and good-nature; and latterly, in this hot season, had distributed among the poorer families the fish he could not sell in the day-time at a reasonable price. Others of the same trade cried out against his unfairness, and he was insulted and beaten in the market-place. So favourable an incident could not escape the sagacious scent of our comic writers. He was represented on the stage as aiming at supreme power, riding upon a dolphin through a stormy sea, with a lyre in one hand, a dogfish in the other, and singing,

> I, whom you see so high on
> A dolphin's back, am not Arion,
> But (should the favouring breezes blow me faster)
> Cecropians! by the Gods! . . your master!

The people were indignant at this, and demanded with loud cries the closing of the theatre, and the abolition of comedies for ever.

What the abuse of the wisest and most powerful men in the community could not effect, the abuse of a fishmonger has brought about.

The writers and actors of comedy came in a body to Pericles, telling him they had seen the madness of the people, and had heard with wonder and consternation that it was supported by some of the archons.

He answered, that he was sorry to see Comedy with a coun-

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tenance so altered as to make him tremble for her approaching dissolution; her descent into the regions of Tragedy. He wondered how the Archons should deem it expedient to correct those, whose office and employment it had hitherto been to correct *them;* and regretted his inability to interpose between two conflicting authorities; he must leave it entirely to the people, who would soon grow calmer, and renew their gratitude to their protectors and patrons.

In the midst of these regrets the theatre for comedy was closed. The poets and actors, as they departed, made various observations.

"Dogs sweat and despots laugh inwardly," said Hegesias. "Did you note his malice? the Sisyphus!"

"We have nothing left for it," said Hipponax, "but to fall on our knees among the scales, fins, and bladders at the fish-stall."

"Better," said Aristophanes, "make up to Religion, and look whether the haughty chieftain has no vulnerable place in his heel for an arrow from that quarter."

"He has broken your bow," said Pherecydes: "take heed that the people do not snatch at the string: they have shown that they can pull hard, and may pull where we would not have them."

CXLIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Thucydides has just left us. He has been reading to me a portion of history. At every pause I nodded to Pericles, who, it seems to me, avoided to remark it purposely, but who in reality was so attentive and thoughtful that it was long before he noticed me. When the reading was over, I said to him,

"So, you two sly personages have laid your sober heads together in order to deceive me; as if I am so silly, so ignorant of peculiarity in style, as not to discover in an instant the fraud you would impose on me. Thucydides!" said I, "you have read it well; only one could have read it better . . the author himself" . . shaking my head at Pericles.

"O Aspasia!" said our guest, "I confess to you I was always a little too fond of praise, although I have lived in retirement to avoid it until due, wishing to receive the whole sum at once, however long I might wait for it. But never did I expect so much as this: it overturns the scale by its weight."

"O Thucydides!" said Pericles, "I am jealous of Aspasia. No one before ever flattered her so in my presence."

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I entreated him to continue to write, and to bring down his history to the present times.

"My reverence for Herodotus," said he, "makes me stand out of his way and look at him from a distance: I was obliged to take another model of style. I hope to continue my work beyond the present day, and to conclude it with some event which shall have exalted our glory and have established our supremacy in Greece."

"Go on," said I; "fear no rivals. Others are writing who fear not even Herodotus, nor greatly indeed respect him. They will be less courteous with you perhaps, whose crown is yet in the garden. The creatures run about and kick and neigh in all directions, with a gadfly on them ever since they left the race-course at Olympia. At one moment they lay the muzzle softly and languidly and lovingly upon each other's neck; at another they rear and bite like Python."

"I ought to experience no enmity from them," said he, "before my time comes, theirs will be over."

CXLIV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

I am pleased with your little note, and hope you may live to write a commentary on the same author. You speak with your usual judgment, in commending our historian for his discretion in metaphors. Not indeed that his language is without them, but they are rare, impressive, and distinct. History wants them occasionally; in oratory they are nearly as requisite as in poetry; they come opportunely wherever the object is persuasion or intimidation, and no less where delight stands foremost. In writing a letter I would neither seek nor reject one: but I think, if more than one came forward, I might decline its services. If however it had come in unawares, I would take no trouble to send it away. But we should accustom ourselves to think always with propriety, in little things as in great, and neither be too solicitous of our dress in the house, nor negligent because we are at home. I think it as improper and indecorous to write a stupid or a silly note to you, as one in a bad hand or on coarse paper. Familiarity ought to have another and worse name, when it relaxes in its attentiveness to please.

We began with metaphors, I will end with one. Do not look back over the letter to see whether I have not already used my privilege of nomination, whether my one is not there. Take then a simile

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instead. It is a pity that they are often lamps which light nothing, and show only the nakedness of the walls they are nailed against.

CXLV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Sophocles left me about an hour ago.

Hearing that he was with Pericles on business, I sent to request he would favour me with a visit when he was disengaged. After he had taken a seat, I entreated him to pardon me, expressing a regret that we hardly ever saw him, knowing as I did that no person could so ill withstand the regrets of the ladies. I added a hope that, as much for my sake as for the sake of Pericles, he would now and then steal an hour from the Muses in our behalf.

"Lady!" said he, "it would only be changing the place of assignation."

"I shall begin with you," said I, "just as if I had a right to be familiar, and desire of you to explain the meaning of a chorus in *King Œdipus*, which, although I have read the tragedy many times, and have never failed to be present at the representation, I do not quite comprehend."

I took up a volume from the table . .

"No," said I, "this is *Electra:* give me the other." We unrolled it together.

"Here it is: what is the meaning of these words about the *Laws?*"

He looked over them, first without opening his lips; then he read them in a low voice to himself; and then, placing the palm of his left hand against his forehead,

"Well! I certainly did think I understood it at the time I wrote it."

Cleone! if you could see him you would fall in love with him. Fifteen olympiads have not quite run away with all his youth. What a noble presence! what an open countenance! what a brow! what a mouth! what a rich harmonious voice! what a heart, full of passion and of poetry!

CXLVI. REPLY OF PERICLES TO THE ACCUSATION OF CLEON.

There is a race of men (and they appear to have led colonies into many lands) whose courage is always in an inverse ratio to their danger. There is also a race who deem that a benefit done to

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another is an injury done to them. Would you affront them, speak well of their friends; would you deprive them of repose, labour and watch incessantly for their country.

Cleon! in all your experience, in all the territories you have visited, in all the cities and islands you have conquered for us, have you never met with any such people? And yet, O generous Cleon! I have heard it hinted that the observation is owing to you.

Were my life a private one, were my services done toward my friends alone, had my youth been exempt as yours hath been from difficulty and peril, I might never have displeased you; I might never have been cited to defend my character against the foulest of imputations. O Athenians! let me recall your attention to every word that Cleon has uttered. I know how difficult is the task, where so much dust is blown about by so much wind. The valorous Cleon has made your ears tingle and ring with Harmodius and Aristogiton. I am ignorant which of the two he would take for imitation, the handsomer or the braver. He stalks along with great bustle and magnificence, but he shows the dagger too plainly: he neglects to carry it in myrtle.

In your astonishment at this sudden procedure, there are doubtless many of you who are unable to comprehend the title of the denunciation. Let me tell you what it is.

"Pericles, son of Xanthippus" . . (may all Greece hear it! may every herald in every city proclaim it at every gate!) "Pericles, son of Xanthippus, is accused of embezzling the public money, collected, reserved, and set apart, for the building and decoration of the Parthenon. The accuser is Cleon, son of Cleæretus."

The scribe has designated the father of our friend by this name, in letters very legible, otherwise I should have suspected it was the son of Cligenes, the parasite of the wealthy, the oppressor of the poor, the assailer of the virtuous, and the ridicule of all. Charges more substantial might surely be brought against me, and indeed were threatened. But never shall I repent of having, by my advice, a little decreased the revenues of the commonwealth, in lowering the price of admission to the theatres, and in offering to the more industrious citizens, out of the public treasury, the trifle requisite for this enjoyment. In the theatre let them see before them the crimes and the calamities of Power, the vicissitudes of Fortune, and the sophistries of the Passions. Let it be there, and there only, that the

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just man suffers, and that murmurs are heard against the dispensations of the Gods.

But I am forgetting the accusation. Will Cleon do me the favour to inform you in what place I have deposited, or in what manner I have spent, the money thus embezzled? Will Cleon tell you that I alone had the custody of it; or that I had anything at all to do in the making up of the accounts? Will Cleon prove to you that I am now richer than I was thirty years ago, excepting in a portion of the spoil, won bravely by the armies you decreed I should command; such a portion as the laws allow, and the soldiers carry to their general with triumphant acclamations. Cleon has yet to learn all this; certainly his wealth is derived from no such sources; far other acclamations does Cleon court; those of the idle, the dissolute, the malignant, the cowardly, and the false. But if he seeks them in Athens, and not beyond, his party is small indeed, and your indignation will drown their voices. What need have I of pilfer and peculation? Am I avaricious? am I prodigal? Does the indigent citizen, does the wounded soldier, come to my door and return unsatisfied? Point at me, Cleon! and tell your friends to mark that. Let them mark it; but for imitation, not for calumny. Let them hear, for they are idle enough, whence I possess the means of relieving the unfortunate, raising the dejected, and placing men of worth and genius (too often in that number!) where all their fellow-citizens may distinguish them. My father died in my childhood; careful guardians superintended it, managing my affairs with honesty and diligence. The earliest of my ancestors, of whom anything remarkable is recorded, was Cleisthenes, whom your forefathers named general with Solon, ordering them to conquer Sirrha. He devoted his portion of the spoils to the building of a portico. I never have heard that he came by night and robbed the labourers he had paid by day: perhaps Cleon has. He won afterward at the Olympian games: I never have ascertained that he bribed his adversaries. These actions are not in history nor in tradition: but Cleon no doubt has authorities that outvalue tradition and history. Some years afterward, Cleisthenes proclaimed his determination to give in marriage his daughter Agarista to the worthiest man he could find, whether at home or abroad. It is pity that Cleon was not living in those days. Agarista and her father, in default of him, could hear of none worthier than Megacles, son of Alcmæon. Their riches all descended to me, and some perhaps

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of their better possessions. These at least, with Cleon's leave, I would retain; and as much of the other as may be serviceable to my friends, without being dangerous to the commonwealth.

CXLVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Surely of all our pursuits and speculations, the most instructive is, how the braver pushed back their sufferings, how the weaker bowed their heads and asked for sympathy, how the soldier smote his breast at the fallacies of glory, and how the philosopher paused and trembled at the depths of his discoveries. But the acquirement of such instruction presses us down to the earth. We see the basest and most inert of mankind the tormentors and consumers of the loftiest: the worm at last devours what the lion and tiger paused at and fled from. But Pericles for the present is safe and secure; and I am too happy for other thoughts or reflections. Anaxagoras also is only doubted: he *may* disbelieve in some mysteries, but he is surely too wise a man to divulge it.

CXLVIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Now we are quiet and at peace again, I wish you would look into your library for more pieces of poetry. To give you some provocation, I will transcribe a few lines on the old subject, which, like old fountains, is inexhaustible, while those of later discovery are in danger of being cut off at the first turn of the plough.

ERINNA TO LOVE.

Who breathes to thee the holiest prayer,
O Love! is ever least thy care.
Alas! I may not ask thee why 'tis so . .
Because a fiery scroll I see
Hung at the throne of Destiny,
Reason with Love and register with Woe.

Few question thee, for thou art strong,
And, laughing loud at right and wrong,
Seizest, and dashest down, the rich, the poor;
Thy sceptre's iron studs alike
The meaner and the prouder strike,
And wise and simple fear thee and adore.

CXLIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Among the poems of Sappho I find the following, but written in a different hand from the rest. It pleases me at least as much as any

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of them; if it is worse, I wish you would tell me in what it is so. How many thoughts might she have turned over and tossed away for it! Odious is the economy in preserving all the scraps of the intellect, and troublesome the idleness of tacking them together. Sappho is fond of seizing, as she runs on, the most prominent and inviting flowers: she never stops to cut and trim them: she throws twenty aside for one that she fixes in her bosom; and what is more singular, her pleasure at their beauty seems never to arise from another's admiration of it. See it or not see it, there it is.

Sweet girls! upon whose breast that God descends
Whom first ye pray to come and next to spare,
O tell me whither now his course he bends,
Tell me what hymn shall thither waft my prayer!
Alas! my voice and lyre alike he flies,
And only in my dreams, nor kindly then, replies.

CL. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Instead of expatiating on the merits of the verses you last sent me, or, on the other hand, of looking for any pleasure in taking them to pieces, I venture to hope you will be of my opinion, that these others are of equal authenticity. Neither do I remember them in the copy you possessed when we were together.

SAPPHO TO HESPERUS.

I have beheld thee in the morning hour
A solitary star, with thankless eyes,
Ungrateful as I am! who bade thee rise
When sleep all night had wandered from my bower.

Can it be true that thou art he
Who shinest now above the sea
Amid a thousand, but more bright?
Ah yes, the very same art thou
That heard me then, and hearest now . .
Thou seemest, star of love! to throb with light.

Sappho is not the only poetess who has poured forth her melodies to Hesperus, or who had reason to thank him. I much prefer these of hers to what appear to have been written by some confident man, and (no doubt) on a feigned occasion.

Hesperus, hail! thy winking light
Best befriends the lover,
Whom the sadder Moon for spite
Gladly would discover.

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Thou art fairer far than she,
Fairer far, and chaster:
She may guess who smiled on me,
I know who embraced her.

Pan of Arcady . . 'twas Pan,
In the tamarisk bushes . .
Bid her tell thee, if she can,
Where were then her blushes.

And, were I inclined to tattle,
I could name a second,
Whom asleep with sleeping cattle
To her cave she beckon'd.

Hesperus, hail! thy friendly ray
Watches o'er the lover,
Lest the nodding leaves betray,
Lest the Moon discover.

Phryne heard my kisses given
Acte's rival bosom . .
'*Twas the buds*, I swore by heaven,
Bursting into blossom.

What she heard, and half espied
By the gleam, she doubted,
And with arms uplifted, cried
'How they must have sprouted!

Hesperus, hail again! thy light
Best befriends the lover,
Whom the sadder Moon for spite
Gladly would discover.

The old poets are contented with narrow couches: but these couches are not stuffed with chaff which lasts only for one season. They do not talk to us from them when they are half-asleep; but think it more amusing to entertain us in our short visit with lively thoughts and fancies, than to enrich us with a paternal prolixity of studied and stored-up meditations.

CLI. PERICLES TO ALCIBIADES.

My Alcibiades, if I did not know your good temper from a whole life's experience, I should be afraid of displeasing you by repeating what I have heard. This is, that you pronounce in public as well as in private a few words somewhat differently from our custom. You

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can not be aware how much hostility you may excite against you by such a practice. Remember, we are Athenians; and do not let us believe that we have finer organs, quicker perceptions, or more discrimination, than our neighbours in the city. Every time we pronounce a word differently from another, we show our disapprobation of his manner, and accuse him of rusticity. In all common things we must do as others do. It is more barbarous to undermine the stability of a language than of an edifice that hath stood as long. This is done by the introduction of changes. Write as others do, but only as the best of others: and if one eloquent man, forty or fifty years ago, spoke and wrote differently from the generality of the present, follow him, though alone, rather than the many. But in pronunciation we are not indulged in this latitude of choice; we must pronounce as those do who favour us with their audience. Never hazard a new expression in public: I know not any liberty we can take, even with our nearest friends, more liable to the censure of vanity. Whatever we do we must do from authority or from analogy. A young man, however studious and intelligent, can know, intrinsically and profoundly, but little of the writers who constitute authority. For my part, in this our country, where letters are far more advanced than in any other, I can name no one whatever who has followed up to their origin the derivation of words, or studied with much success their analogy. I do not, I confess, use all the words that others do, but I never use one that others do not. Remember, one great writer may have employed a word which a greater has avoided, or, not having avoided it, may have employed in a somewhat different signification. It would be needless to offer you these remarks, if our language were subject to the capriciousness of courts, the humiliation of sycophants, and the defilement of slaves. Another may suffer but little detriment by the admission of barbarism to its franchises; but ours is attic, and the words, like the citizens we employ, should at once be popular and select.

CLII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

The poetical merits of the unhappy Lesbian are sufficiently well known. Thanks, and more than thanks, if indeed there is anything more on earth, are due for even one scrap from her. But allow me, what is no great delicacy or delight to me, a reprehension, a censure.

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An admirer can make room for it only when it comes from an admirer. Sappho, in the most celebrated of her Odes, tells us that she sweats profusely. Now surely no female, however low-born and ill-bred, in short however Eolian, could without indecorousness speak of sweating and spitting, or any such things. We never ought to utter, in relation to ourselves, what we should be ashamed of being seen in. Writing of war and contention, such an expression is unobjectionable. To avoid it by circumlocution, or by any other word less expressive and direct, would be the most contemptible and ludicrous of pedantry: and, were it anywhere reduced to practice in the conversation of ordinary life, it would manifestly designate a coarse-grained unpolishable people. There is nothing in poetry, or indeed in society, so unpleasant as affectation. In poetry it arises from a deficiency of power and a restlessness of pretension; in conversation, from insensibility to the Graces, from an intercourse with bad company, and a misinterpretation of better.

CLIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

You desire to know what portion of history it is the intention of Thucydides to undertake. He began with the earlier settlers of Greece, but he has now resolved to employ this section as merely the portico to his edifice. The Peloponesian war appears to him worthier of the historian than any other. He is of opinion that it must continue for many years and comprehend many important events, for Pericles is resolved to wear out the energy of the Spartans by protracting it. At present it has been carried on but few months, with little advantage to either side, and much distress to both. What our historian has read to us does not contain any part of these transactions, which however he carefully notes down as they occur. We were much amused by a speech he selected for recitation, as one delivered by an orator of the Corinthians to the Ephors of Lacedæmon, urging the justice and necessity of hostilities. Never was the Athenian character painted in such true and lively colours. In composition his characteristic is brevity, yet the first sentence of the volume runs into superfluity. The words, to the best of my recollection, are these:

"Thucydides of Athens has composed a history of the war between the Peloponesians and Athenians."

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This is enough; yet he adds,

"As conducted by each of the belligerents."

Of course: it could not be conducted by one only.

I observed that in the fourth sentence he went from the third person to the first.

By what I could collect, he thinks the Peloponesian war more momentous than the Persian: yet had Xerxes prevailed against us, not a vestige would be existing of liberty or civilisation in the world. If Sparta should, there will be little enough; and a road will be thrown open to the barbarians of the north, Macedonians and others with strange names. We have no great reason to fear it; although the policy of Thebes, on whom much depends, is ungenerous and unwise.

He said moreover that "transactions of an earlier time are known imperfectly, and were of small importance either in the wars or anything else."

Yet without these wars, or some other of these transactions, our Miletus and Athens, our Pericles and Thucydides, would not be; so much does one thing depend upon another. I am little disposed to overvalue the potency and importance of the eastern monarchies; but surely there is enough to excite our curiosity, and interest our inquiries, in the fall of Chaldæa, the rise of Babylon, and the mysteries of Egypt . . . not indeed her mysteries in theology, which are impostures there as elsewhere, but the mysteries in arts and sciences, which will outlive the Gods. Barbarians do not hold steadily before us any moral or political lesson; but they serve as graven images, protuberantly eminent and gorgeously uncouth, to support the lamp placed on them by History and Philosophy. If we knew only what they said and did, we should turn away with horror and disgust: but we pound their mummies to colour our narratives; and we make them as useful in history as beasts are in fable.

Thucydides shows evidently, by his preliminary observations, that he considers the Trojan war unimportant. Yet, according to Homer, the Grecian troops amounted to above a hundred thousand. In reality, so large a force hath never been assembled in any naval expedition, nor even one half. How was it provisioned at Aulis? how, on the shores of the Troad? And all these soldiers, with chariots and horses, were embarked for Troy a few years after the first ship of war left the shores of Greece! yes, a very few years

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indeed; for the Argo had among her crew the brothers of Helen, who can not well be supposed to have been five years older than herself. It is of rare occurrence, even in the climate of Sparta, that a mother bears children after so long an interval; and we have no reason to believe that such a time had elapsed between the brothers and their sister. Suppose the twins to have been twenty-two years old (for they had become celebrated for horsemanship and boxing) and Helen seventeen, you will find little space left between the expeditions.

But away with calculation. We make a bad bargain when we change poetry for truth in the affairs of ancient times, and by no means a good one in any.

Remarkable men of remote ages are collected together out of different countries within the same period, and perform simultaneously the same action. On an accumulation of obscure deeds arises a wild spirit of poetry; and images and names burst forth and spread themselves, which carry with them something like enchantment, far beyond the infancy of nations. What was vague imagination settles at last and is received for history. It is difficult to effect and idle to attempt the separation: it is like breaking off a beautiful crystallisation from the vault of some intricate and twilight cavern, out of mere curiosity to see where the accretion terminates and the rock begins.

CLIV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

We have lost another poet, and have none left beside the comic. Euripides is gone to the court of Archelaüs. A few years ago he gained the prize against all competitors. He was hailed by the people as a deliverer, for subverting the ascendancy and dominion which Sophocles had acquired over them. The Athenians do not like to trust any man with power for life. Sophocles is now an old man, sixty years of age at the least, and he had then been absolute in the theatre for above a quarter of a century. What enthusiasm! what acclamations! for overthrowing the despot who had so often made them weep and beat their breasts. He came to visit us on the day of his defeat: Euripides was with us at the time.

"Euripides," said he, "we are here alone, excepting our friends Aspasia and Pericles. I must embrace you, now it can not seem an act of ostentation."

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He did so, and most cordially.

"I should be glad to have conquered you," continued he; "it would have been very glorious."

I never saw Pericles more moved. These are the actions that shake his whole frame, and make his eyes glisten. Euripides was less affected. He writes tenderly, but is not tender. There are hearts that call for imagination: there are others that create it.

I must abstain from all reflections that fall too darkly on the departed. We may see him no more perhaps: I am sorry for it. He did not come often to visit us, nor indeed is there anything in his conversation to delight or interest me. He has not the fine manners of Sophocles; nor the open unreserved air, which Pericles tells me he admired so much in the soldierly and somewhat proud Æschylus; grave and taciturn, I hear, like himself, unless when something pleased him; and then giving way to ebullitions and bursts of rapture, and filling everyone with it round about.

The movers and masters of our souls have surely a right to throw out their limbs as carelessly as they please, on the world that belongs to them, and before the creatures they have animated. It is only such insects as petty autocrats that feel oppressed by it, and would sting them for it. Pericles is made of the same clay. He can not quite overcome his stateliness, but he bends the more gracefully for bending slowly.

When I think of Euripides, I think how short a time it is since he was hailed as a deliverer, and how odious he is become for breaking in upon our affections at an unseasonable hour, and for carrying our hearts into captivity. All the writers of the day were resolved to humble him, and ran about from magistrate to magistrate, to raise money enough for the magnificent representation of his rival . . I have forgotten the man's name. Pericles never thwarts the passions and prejudices of the citizens. In his adolescence he visited the humble habitation of the venerable Æschylus: throughout life he has been the friend of Sophocles: he has comforted Euripides in his defeats, telling him that by degrees he would teach the people to be better judges: he rejoiced with him on his first victory, reminding him of his prophecy, and remarking that they two, of all the Athenians, had shown the most patience and had been the best rewarded for it.

We hope he may return.

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CLV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The two pieces I am about to transcribe are of styles very different. I find them among the collections of Pericles, but am ignorant of the authors.

Far from the harp's and from the singer's noise,
The bird of Pallas lights on ruin'd towers.
I know a wing that flaps o'er girls and boys
To harp and song and kiss in myrtle bowers;
When age is come, I too will sit apart,
While age is absent, *that* shall fan my heart.

CUPID AND LIGEIA.

Cupid had played some wicked trick one day
On sharp Ligeia; and I heard her say,
"You little rogue! you ought to be unsext."
He was as spiteful tho' not quite so vext,
And said (but held half-shut the folding-doors)
"Ah then my beard will never grow like yours!"

CLVI. FIRST SPEECH OF PERICLES TO THE ATHENIANS.

On the Declarations of Corinth and Lacedæmon.

The Regency at Lacedæmon has resolved to make an irruption into Attica, if we attempt anything adverse to Potidæa, hearing that on the declaration of hostilities by Corinth, we ordered the Potidæans, whose infidelity we had detected, to demolish the wall facing Pallene. In reliance on their treason, Perdiccas and the Corinthians had entered into confederacy, and were exciting the defection of our Thracian auxiliaries. Perdiccas prevailed with the Chalcidians to dismantle all their towns upon the seaside, and to congregate in Olynthos. We made a truce, and afterward a treaty, with Perdiccas: he evacuates the territory he had invaded; we strictly beleaguer the revolted Potidæa. The ephors of Lacedæmon now summon to appear before them not only their allies, but whosoever has any complaint to prefer against the Athenians. Hereupon the Megaræans come forward, and protest that they have been prohibited from our markets, contrary to treaty; and what is worse, that we exclude them from the possession of Potidæa, so convenient for extending their power and authority into Thrace. They appear, in their long oration, to have forgotten nothing, unless that they had murdered our citizens and ambassadors.

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By what right, O Athenians, is Lacedæmon our judge? Corinth may impell her into war against us; but Corinth can never place her on the judgment-seat of Greece; nor shall their united voices make us answer to the citation. We will declare, not to her but to all, our reasons and our rights. The Corcyræans had erected a trophy at Leucimna, and had spared after the victory their Corinthian captives: they had laid waste the territory of Leucas and they had burnt the arsenal of Cyllene. Meanwhile the Corinthians sent ambassadors to every power in the Peloponese, and enlisted mariners for their service upon every coast. If valour and skill and constancy could have availed the Corcyræans, they would have continued to abstain, as they had ever done, from all alliances. They only sought ours when destruction was imminent; knowing that, in policy and humanity, we never could allow the extinction of one Grecian state, nor consequently the aggrandisement and preponderance of another; and least so when the insolence of Corinth had threatened our naval ascendancy (by which all Greece was saved), and the rivalry of Lacedæmon our equality on land. By our treaty with the Lacedæmonians it is provided that, if any community be not in alliance with one of the parties, it may confederate with either, at its discretion; and this compact it was agreed should be binding not only on the principals but likewise on the subordinates. In such a predicament stands Corcyra.

It might behove us to chastise the inhumanity of a nation which, like Corinth, would devour her own offspring; but it certainly is most just and most expedient, when, instead of reasoning or conferring with us on the propriety of our interference, she runs at once to Sparta, conspiring with her to our degradation, and, if possible, to our ruin. Satisfactorily to demonstrate our justice and moderation, I advise that we stipulate with Corcyra for mutual defence, never for aggression, and admitting no article which, even by a forced interpretation, may contravene our treaty with Lacedæmon.

CLVII. SECOND SPEECH OF PERICLES.

The jealousy that Sparta hath ever entertained against us, was declared most flagrantly, when Leotychides, who commanded the Grecian forces at Mycale, drew away with him all the confederates of the Peloponese. We continued to assail the barbarians until we drove them from Sestos, their last hold upon the Hellespont. It was then,

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and then only, that the Athenians brought back again from miserable refuge their wives and children, and began to rebuild their habitations, and walls for their defence. Did the Spartans view this constancy and perseverance with admiration and with pity, as the patriotic, the generous, the humane, would do? Did they send ambassadors to congratulate your fathers on their valour, their endurance, their prosperous return, their ultimate security? Ambassadors they sent indeed, but insisting that our walls should never rise again from their ruins. A proposal so unjust and arrogant we treated with scorn and indignation, when our numbers were diminished and our wealth exhausted: shall we bend to their decisions and obey their orders now? If their power of injuring us were in proportion to their malice, their valour to their pride, or their judgment to their ferocity, then were they most formidable indeed: but turn we to the examination of facts. Having occasion to reduce to obedience a few revolted Helotes in the city of Ithome, to whom did they apply? to the Athenians; for they themselves were utterly ignorant how to attack or even to approach a fortress. Even then they showed their jealousy, rewarding our promptitude to assist them by the ignominious dismissal of our troops. What was the consequence? a ten years' siege. And these, O Athenians! are the men who now threaten the Acropolis and Piræus!

I can compare the Lacedæmonians to nothing more fitly than to the heads of spears without the shafts. There would be abundantly the power of doing mischief, were there only the means and method of directing it. Where these are wanting, we have no better cause for apprehension than at the sparks of fire under our horse's hoof, lest they produce a conflagration; which indeed they might do, if by their nature they were durable and directable.

Let us see what powerful aid our enemies are expecting; what confederates they are stirring up against us. The Megaræans, who left their alliance for ours; the Megaræans, whom we defended against the Corinthians, and whose walls we constructed at our own expense from Megara to Nisæa. Is it on the constancy or on the gratitude of this people that Lacedæmon in her wisdom so confidently relies? No sooner had we landed in Eubœa, than intelligence was brought us that the Peloponesians were about to make an incursion into Attica, and that the Athenian garrison was murdered by the Megaræans, who already had formed a junction with the Corinthians,

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Sicyonians, and Epidaurians. We sailed homeward, and discomfited the Peloponesians; returned, and reduced Eubæa. A truce for thirty years was granted to Lacedæmon, restoring to her Nisæa, Calchis, Pegai, and Trœzene. Five years afterward a war broke out between the Samians and Miletus. Justice and our treaties obliged us to rescue that faithful and unfortunate city from the two-fold calamity that impended over her. Many of the Samians were as earnest in imploring our assistance as the Milesians were: for, whatever might be the event of the war, they were sure of being reduced to subjection; if conquered, by a wronged and exasperated enemy; if conquerors, by the king. A rapacious and insolent oligarchy saw no other means of retaining its usurped authority, than by extending it with rigour; and were conscious that it must fall from under them unless the sceptre propped it. Honest men will never seek such aid, and free men will never endure such.

There may be nations monarchal and aristocratical, where the public good is little thought of, and often impeded by restless steps toward personal or family aggrandisement. But there is no man, even among these, so barbarous and inhuman, as to be indifferent to the approbation of some one in his city beloved above all the rest, from whom the happy rush forward for admiration, the less fortunate are gratified with a tear: life, they would tell us, is well lost for either. We Athenians have loftier views, and, I will not say purer, but the same and more ardent aspirations.

In the late brief war, the greater part of you here present have won immortal glory; and let us not believe that those who fell from your ranks in battle are yet insensible to the admiration and the gratitude of their countrymen. No one among us, whatever services he may have rendered to Athens, has received such praises, such benedictions, such imperishable rewards, as they have. Happy men! they are beyond the reach of calumny and reverses. There is only one sad reflection resting with them: they can serve their country no more. How high was the value of their lives! they knew it, and bartered them for renown. We, in this war unjustly waged against us, shall be exposed to fewer dangers, but more privations. In the endurance of these, our manliness will be put severely to the proof, and virtues which have not been called forth in fifty years, virtues which our enemies seem to have forgotten that we possess, must again come into action, as if under the eyes of a Themistocles and an

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Aristides. We have all done much; but we have all done less than we can do, ought to do, and will do.

Archidamos, king of Sparta, now about to march against us, is bound to me by the laws of hospitality. Should he, whether in remembrance of these, or in the design of rendering me suspected, abstain from inflicting on my possessions the violence he is about to inflict on the rest of Attica, let it be understood that henceforth I have no private property in this land, but, in the presence of the Gods, make a free donation of it to the commonwealth. Let all withdraw their cattle, corn, and other effects, from the country, and hold Athens as one great citadel, from which the Deity who presides over her hath forbidden us to descend.

CLVIII. ORATION OF PERICLES.

On the approach of the Lacedæmonians to Athens.

Long ago, and lately, and in every age intervening, O Athenians! have you experienced the jealousy and insolence of Lacedæmon. She listens now to the complaints of Corinth, because the people of Corcyra will endure no longer her vexations, and because their navy, in which the greater part of the mariners have fought and conquered by the side of ours, seek refuge in the Piræus. A little while ago she dared to insist that we should admit the ships of Megara to our harbour, her merchandise to our markets, when Megara had broken her faith with us, and gone over to the Spartans. Even this indignity we might perhaps have endured. We told the Lacedæmonians that we would admit the Megaræans to that privilege, if the ports of Sparta would admit us and our allies: although we and our allies were never in such relationship with her, and therefore could never have fallen off from her. She disdained to listen to a proposal so reasonable, to a concession so little to be expected from us. Resolved to prove to her that generosity, and not fear, dictated it, we chastised the perfidious Megara.

The king of the Lacedæmonians, Archidamos, a wiser and honester man than any of his people, is forced to obey the passions he would control; and an army of sixty thousand men is marching under his command to ravage Attica. The braver will rather burn their harvests than transfer to a sanguinary and insatiable enemy the means of inflicting evil on their relatives and friends. Few, I trust,

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are base enough, sacrilegious enough, to treat as guests, those whom you before men and Gods denounce as enemies. We will receive within our walls the firm and faithful. And now let the orators who have blamed our expenditure in the fortification of the city, tell us again that it was improvident. They would be flying in dismay had not those bulwarks been raised effectually. Did it require any sagacity to foresee that Athens would be the envy of every state around? Was there any man so ignorant as not to know that he who has lost all his enemies will soon lose all his energy? and that men are no more men when they cease to act, than rivers are rivers when they cease to run? The forces of our assailants must be broken against our walls. Our fleets are our farms henceforward, until the Spartans find that, if they can subsist on little, they can not so well subsist on stones and ashes. Their forces are vast; but vast forces have never much hurt us. Marathon and Platæa were scarcely wide enough for our trophies; a victorious army, an unvanquished fleet, Miltiades himself, retired unsuccessful from the rock of Paros. Shall we tremble then before a tumultuous multitude, ignorant how cities are defended or assailed? Shall we prevent them from coming to their discomfiture and destruction? Firmly do I believe that the Protectress of our city leads them against it to avenge her cause. They may ravage the lands; they can not cultivate, they can not hold them. Mischief they will do, and great; much of our time, much of our patience, much of our perseverance, and something of our courage, are required. At present I do not number this event among our happiest. We must owe our glory partly to ourselves and partly to our enemies. They offer us the means of greatness; let us accept their offer. Brief danger is the price of long security. The countryman, from the mists of the morning, not only foretells the brightness of the day, but discerns in them sources of fertility; and he remembers in his supplications to the immortal Gods to thank them alike for both blessings. It is thus, O men of Athens, that you have constantly looked up at calamities. Never have they depressed you: always have they chastened your hearts, always have they exalted your courage. Impelled by the breath of Xerxes, the locusts of Asia consumed your harvests; your habitations crumbled away as they swarmed along: the temples of the Gods lay prostrate; the Gods themselves bowed and fell: the men of Athens rose higher than ever. They had turned their faces in grief from the scene of

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devastation and impiety; but they listened to a provident valour, and the myriads of insects that had plagued them were consumed.

There is affront in exhortation. I have spoken.

CLIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

On the shore overlooking the fountain of Arethusa there is a statue of Æschylus. An Athenian who went to visit it, crowned it with bay and ivy, and wrote these verses at the base.

Stranger! Athenian hands adorn
A bard thou knowest well.
Ah! do not ask where he was born,
For we must blush to tell.

Proud are we, but we place no pride
On good, or wise, or brave;
Hence what Cephisus had denied
'Twas Arethusa gave.

You remember the story of a barbarous king, who would have kept the Muses in captivity. His armoury furnished an enemy of the poet Lysis with these materials for skirmishing.

TO LYSIS.

A curse upon the king of old
Who would have kidnapp'd all the Muses!
Whether to barter them for gold
Or keep them for his proper uses.

Lysis! aware he meant them ill,
Birds they became, and flew away . .
Thy Muse alone continues still
A titmouse to this very day.

Do not call me sly and perfidious, if, after tickling you with this feather, I have not only permitted a wicked thought to enter my head, but have also devised a place for it, if possible, in yours. The lines below are none of my composition, as you may well imagine from my character.

There is in kisses a delight;
A fragrance of the wine
Quaft by the happier in the genial night
Is there; may these be mine!

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What said I? empty kisses? none are empty.
Gods! all the just who give
That graceful feast from every grief exempt ye!
Blest, honour'd, grant they live!

And now I have written them fairly out, I am afraid of sending them: for I remember that if ever I uttered such a word as *kiss*, you wondered at me. Really and truly it was as far from wonder as anything could be, and so it will be now; but it was very near a slight displeasure, which now it must not be.

CLX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

After an interval of nearly three years, Comedy may re-appear on the stage. It is reported that Pericles obtained this indulgence from the archons; and in consequence of it he is now represented by the dramatists as a Jupiter, who lightens and thunders, and what not. Before he became a Jupiter, I believe he was represented as the enemy of that God, and most of the others; and the people having no public amusement, no diversion to carry off their ill-humours, listened gloomily to such discourses. Pericles noted it, and turned them into their fold again, and had them piped to; but not before the fly entered the fleece.

CLXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Twenty days, O Cleone, twenty days are not elapsed, since Anaxagoras told me that he was about to leave Attica for the Propontis. I urged him to alter his resolution. He affirmed that his presence in the house of Pericles had brought a cloud over it, which would only disappear by his absence. "Of late," said he, "I have received so much kindness from the philosophers, that I begin to suspect a change of fortune by no means in my favour. I must fly while the weather is temperate, as the swallows do."

He mixes not with the people, he converses with none of them, and yet he appears to have penetrated into the deepest and darkest recesses of their souls.

Pericles has lost their favour; Anaxagoras is banished; Aspasia . . but what is Aspasia? Yours; and therefore you must hear about her.

We have all been accused of impiety; Anaxagoras and myself have been brought to trial for the offence. Diopeithes is the name of our accuser. He began with Anaxagoras; and having proved by three witnesses that he in their hearing had declared his opinion that

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lightning and thunder were the effect of some combustion and concussion in the clouds, and that they often happened when Jupiter was in perfectly good-humour, not thinking at all about the Athenians, there was instantly such a rage and consternation in the whole assembly, that the judges were called upon from every quarter to condemn him for impiety; sentence, death.

Pericles rose. He for the first time in his life was silenced by the clamorous indignation of the people. All parties, all classes, men, women, children, priests, sailors, tavern-keepers, diviners, slave-merchants, threatened, raged, foamed.

"Pericles! you yourself will soon be cited before this august tribunal," said Diopeithes. The clamour now began to subside. Curiosity, wonder, apprehension of consequences, divided the assembly; and when Pericles lifted up his arm, the agitation, the murmurs, and the whispers, ceased.

"O men of Athens!" said he calmly, "I wish it had pleased the Gods that the vengeance of Diopeithes had taken its first aim against me, whom you have heard so often, known so long, and trusted so implicitly. But Diopeithes hath skulked from his ambush and seized upon the unsuspecting Anaxagoras, in the hope that, few knowing him, few can love him. The calculation of Diopeithes is correct: they who love him are but those few. They however who esteem and reverence him can only be numbered by him who possesses a register of all the wise and all the virtuous men in Greece."

Anaxagoras stepped forward, saying,

"You, O Athenians! want defenders, and will want them more: I look for protection to no mortal arm; I look for it to that divine power, the existence of which my accuser tells you I deny."

"He shirks the thunder," said one.

"He sticks to the blind side of Jupiter," said another.

Such were the observations of the pious and malicious, who thought to expiate all their sins by throwing them on his shoulders, and driving him out of the city. He was condemned by a majority of voices. Pericles followed him through the gates, beyond the fury of his persecutors.

CLXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Three days after the banishment of Anaxagoras, the threat of Diopeithes was carried into effect; not against the person of Pericles,

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but against your Aspasia. Diopeithes had himself denounced me, on the same count as Anaxagoras: and Hermippos, whose entire life has been (they tell me) one sluggish stream of gross impurities, impeached me as a corruptress of the public morals.

You will imagine, my Cleone, that something loose and lascivious was brought forward in accusation against me. No such thing. Nothing of the kind is considered as having any concern with public morals here in Athens. My crime was, seducing young men from their parents and friends; retaining them in conversation at our house; encouraging them to study the sciences in preference to the machinations of sophists; to leave the declaimers an empty room for the benefit of their voices, and to adhere more closely to logic before they venture upon rhetoric.

You will now perceive, that all who have the most interest and the most exercise in the various artifices of deception, were my enemies. I feared lest Pericles should run further into the danger of losing his popularity by undertaking my defence, and resolved to be my own pleader. The hour had been appointed for opening the trial: I told him it was one hour later. When it was nearly at hand, I went out of the house unobserved, and took my place before the assembly of the people. My words were these.

"If any of the accusations brought against me were well founded, they would have been known to Pericles. It would be strange were he indifferent to any offence of mine against the laws, especially such as you accuse me of, unless he is, as the accusation would imply, insensible to honour, propriety, and decency. Is this his character? He never has had an enemy bold and false enough to say it: I wonder at this; yet he never has."

The people, who had been silent, now began to favour me, when Diopeithes asked me, whether I could deny my conversations with Anaxagoras, and my adherence to his tenets.

Love of truth, pity for Anaxagoras, and pride (it may be) in the strength of mind he had given me, and in the rejection of unworthy notions on the Gods, urged me to say,

"I deny no conversation I ever had with him, no tenet I ever received, no duty I ever learnt from him. He taught me veneration for the Gods; and I pray them to render me grateful for it."

Pericles at this moment stood at my side. Indignation that he should have followed Anaxagoras out of the gates, and should have

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embraced him affectionately at parting, turned many furious faces, furious cries, and furious gestures against him. He looked round disdainfully, and said aloud,

"Respect the laws and the unfortunate, you who revere the Gods!

"It was not the condemned man I followed out of the city: it was age, which would have sunk under blows; it was rectitude, which feared not death; it was friendship, which if I can not make you esteem, I will not implore you to pardon.

"At last, O Athenians! my enemies and yours have persuaded you to assemble in this place, and to witness the humiliation and affliction of one who never failed to succour the unfortunate, and who has been the solace of my existence many years. Am I, of all in Athens, the man who should mistake crimes for virtues: the man pointed out from among the rest as the most insensible to his dignity? How widely then have you erred in calling me to your counsels! how long, how wilfully, how pertinaciously! Is it not easier to believe that two or three are mistaken now, than that you all, together with your fathers and best friends, whose natal days and days of departure from us, you still keep holy, have been always so?"

Hermippos and Diopeithes, seeing that many were moved, interrupted him furiously.

"O Pericles!" cried Hermippos, "we are aware that this woman of Ionia, this Milesian, this Aspasia, entertains the same opinions as yourself."

"Highly criminal!" answered Pericles, with a smile; "I hope no other Athenian is cursed with a wife liable to so grievous an accusation."

"Scoffer!" cried Diopeithes; "dare you deny that in the summer of this very year, when you were sailing to lay waste the coasts of the Peloponese, you attempted to pervert the religion of the sailors? The sun was suddenly bedimmed: darkness came over the sea, as far even as unto our city! the pilot fell upon his face and prayed: and did not you, O Pericles! raise him up with one hand, and, throwing your mantle over his eyes with the other, ask whether he found anything dreadful in it! And when he answered in his piety, 'It is not *that*,' did not you reply,

"'The other darkness is no otherwise different than in its greater extent, and produced by somewhat larger than my mantle'?"

"Proceed to interrogate," said Pericles.

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"Answer that first, O sacrilegious man!" exclaimed Diopeithes.

"Athenians!" said Pericles, "many of you here present were with me in the expedition. Do assure Diopeithes that it was not my mantle which darkened the sea and sun, that to your certain knowledge both sun and sea were dark before I took it off. So that the Gods, if they were angry at all, were angry earlier in the day. And not only did the sun shine out again, bright and serene as ever, but the winds were favourable, the voyage prosperous, the expedition successful.

"It appears to me that the Gods are the most angry when they permit the malicious and the false to prevail over the generous and simple-hearted; when they permit the best affections to be violated, and the worst to rise up in disorder to our ruin. Nor do I believe that they are very well pleased at hearing their actions and motives called in question; or at winks and intimations that they want discernment to find out offenders, and power and justice to punish them."

"In spite of philosophers,"-cried Diopeithes, "we still have our Gods in Athens."

"And our men too," replied he, "or these before me must only be the shadows of those who, but lately under my command, won eternal renown in Samos."

Tears rose into his eyes: they were for me; but he said in a low voice, audible however in the silence that had succeeded to a loud and almost universal acclamation,

"At least for our lost comrades a few tears are not forbidden us."

The people struck their breasts: the judges unanimously acquitted me, surrounded Pericles, and followed us home with enthusiastical congratulations.

CLXIII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Never did our house receive so many visitors as on my acquittal. Not only our friends and acquaintances, but every one who had fought under Pericles, came forward to offer his felicitations and his services. I was forgotten . . the danger, the insult, seemed his. When they had all retired to dinner, he too left me with my music and I did not see him again until late the next morning. It was evident he had slept but little. He came up to me, and pressing my hand, said,

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"Aspasia! I have gained a great victory; the greatest, the most glorious, and the only one not subject to a reverse."

I thought his words related to his defence of me: I was mistaken.

"It was yesterday, for the first time," said he, "that I knew the extent of my power. I could have demolished the houses of my adversaries; I could have exiled them from the city; I could have been their master: I am more; I am my own.

"Great injuries create great power; no feeble virtues are necessary to its rejection. In polity," continued he, "the humble may rise, but not the fallen. States live but once. Had I no Aspasia, no children, I am ignorant what support I could have found against the impulses of ambition. Many who seize upon kingly power, are the more desirous of possessing it because they have sons to succeed them. Imprudent men! they expose those sons to infinite dangers, and create no new advantages for them. If they provided for their security, they would abdicate their power, when about to be taken away by death from those over whom they exercised it. If they provided for their glory, they would not subject them to the reproach, always merited, of possessing less activity and sagacity than their father. Do they care about their wisdom or their virtue? they will not cast them among idlers and sycophants, nor abandon them on a solitary island, where many sing and none discourse. What life is wretcheder? what state more abject?"

"Yours, my dear Pericles!" said I, "is far happier, but by no means enviable."

"True!" answered he: "I am subject to threats, curses, denunciations, ostracism, and hemlock: but I glory in the glory of the state, and I know that I can maintain it."

I was listening with attention, when he said to me with an air of playfulness,

"Am I not a boaster? am I not proud of my command? am I not over-fond of it, when I am resolved not to transmit it hereditarily to another?"

"Rightly judged! dear Pericles!" said I: "you always act judiciously and kindly."

"Political men, like goats," continued he, "usually thrive best among inequalities. I have chosen the meadow; and not on the whole imprudently. My life has been employed in making it more pleasurable, more even, more productive. The shepherds have often

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quarrelled with me; and but now the sheep too, in their wisdom, turned their heads against me."

We went into the air, and saw Alcibiades walking in the garden. He, not observing us, strode along rapidly, striking with his cane every tree in the alley. When we came up nearer, he was repeating,

"The fanatical knaves! I would knock the heads off all their Mercuries.

"Noisy demagogues! I would lead them into the midst of the enemy . . I would drag them on by the ears . . not fifty should return. *They* in their audacity impeach Aspasia! *they* bring tears into the eyes of Pericles! I will bring more into theirs, by holy Jupiter!"

He started at our approach. My husband laid his hands upon the youth's shoulder, and said to him,

"But, Alcibiades! if you do not lead fifty back, where will you leave the captives?"

He sprang to the neck of his guardian, and, turning his face toward me, blushed and whispered,

"Did she too hear me?"

CLXIV. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

I would not disturb you, my beloved Pericles! but let not anything else! Why are you so busy now the danger is over? why do so many come to you, with countenances so earnest when they enter, and so different from composed when they go away? You never break your resolutions, otherwise I should fear they might lead you above the place of fellow citizen. Then farewell happiness, farewell manliness, security, sincerity, affection, honour!

O Pericles! descend from the car of Victory on the course itself. In abandoning power and station, what do you abandon but inquietude and ingratitude?

CLXV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

We never alight from a carriage while it is going down a hill, but always at the top or at the bottom. There is less danger in being shaken out than there is in leaping out.

Were I at this juncture to abdicate my authority, I should appear to the people to confess a fault, and to myself to commit one.

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I must defend those who would have defended me. Rely on my firmness in all things; on Pericles, one, immutable.

CLXVI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Alcibiades will one time or other bring us all into peril by his recklessness and precipitation.

When he heard I was arraigned and Pericles threatened, he ran from house to house among the officers of the army, embraced them, knelt before them, adjured them to save their general from ignominy, his wife from insult, the city from mourning, and themselves from inactivity. He swore that if they would not, he would: that two thousand of the same age, or rather older, would join him and obey him, and that he would throw judges, accusers, applauders, listeners, over the Piræus. Not a soldier did he pass without a kiss, without a pressure of the hand, without a promise; not a girl in Athens that was not his sister, not a matron that was not his mother.

Within an hour, in every part of the city there were cries,

"The Lacedæmonians have none of these rogues among them."

"No accusers there: no judges there."

"Archidamos is wise; Pericles is wiser: shall the one be a king, the other a culprit?"

"Shall his war-horse," cried a soldier, "carry panniers?"

"Fore-foot and hind-foot say I," cried another, "against these market-place swine, these black-muzzled asses!"

"Out upon them! what have they won for us?" cried another.

"And what have we not won for them?" roared the next.

"What was all the stir about?" asked one more quiet.

"They dared to accuse our General of denying their dues to the Gods. Liars! he gives every man his due." A laugh arose. "No laughing here! I uphold it, we soldiers can take as good care of the Gods as they can. Who believes they ever were in danger? Pericles might have cracked them by the dozen: he has left them all standing; not a head missing. Save him, comrades, from the cowards, the poisoners."

On all sides of the city the soldiers ran to their officers, and then toward the house of Pericles. It was with difficulty he could dissuade them from their resolution to confer upon him the same authority and station as Archidamos holds among the Spartans.

"We shall then meet the enemy upon equal terms," said they;

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"ay, more than equal; affability for moroseness, liberality for parsimony."

The greater part of the citizens would have followed; the turbulent for change, the peaceable for tranquillity.

My husband has allayed the tempest: his ambition is higher. Nothing can be taken from the name of Pericles, and what is added to it must be of baser metal.

CLXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The poet Hermippos will be remembered for the malignity of his accusation against me, when all the poetry he has ever written, even the worst of it, is forgotten. At what a price would many men purchase the silence of futurity! Hermippos will procure it reasonably, excepting two memorable words, *Prosecutor* of *Aspasia*. Such people show me only the more clearly to the world, by throwing their torches at me. Pallas hath whispered in my ear, both dreaming and awake, that distant times shall recognise me, never perhaps alone, but sometimes by the side of Pericles, and sometimes on the bosom of Cleone.

CLXVIII. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

What but the late outrages, or rather, what but the ascendancy you have obtained in consequence, could have brought the aristocratical party to offer you their services, in helping to keep down the ferocity of the populace? It might indeed be well to unite them, were it possible; but not being possible, I would rather place the more confidence in the less ignorant and turbulent.

CLXIX. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! as you are cautious not to look earnestly at a handsome man, but rather turn your eyes another way, so must I do in regard to Aristocracy. It is not proper that I should discover any charms in her.

Among the losses I sustained by the flight of youth, I ought to regret my vanity. I had not enough of it for a robe, but I had enough for a vest; enough to keep me warm and comfortable. Not a remnant have I now. Why be ashamed of our worthy party? Did I espouse it for its virtues? Was it ever in high repute for its fidelity? What is it to me whether a couple or two of housed pards

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bite one another's tails off or not, excepting that they lie down the quieter for it afterward? They have still heads and necks to be led along by. We have only to walk up to them firmly, to look at them steadily, speak to them boldly, lay the hand upon them confidently as their masters, and grasp them with a tenacity that neither relaxes nor hurts. He who does this, and there are some who can do it, may go forth and catch other beasts with them, and feast all his friends in the city.

CLXX. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

There is irritation in your irony, O Pericles! your spirit is not at rest. Unworthily, for the first time since I knew you, have you thought and spoken! *Thought!* no, Pericles! passion is not thought. Contumely has produced this bitterness; it left you with the words.

CLXXI. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! you have looked into my heart, and purified it. Your indignities sometimes rise up before me; and it is only when I am prompted to do wrong by others, that I recover all my firmness. Athens has a right to my solicitude and devotion. I will forget no favour she has ever shown me, and remember no enmity.

CLXXII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Peace is at all times a blessing; and war, even the most prosperous, a curse. In war extremely few of men's desires are gratified, and those the most hateful; in peace many, and those the kindliest. Were it possible to limit the duration of hostilities, the most adverse nations, in the enjoyment of a long security, would find time enough for the cultivation of the social affections, and for the interchange of hospitality and other friendly offices. As some bodily diseases, if they can only be deferred for a certain time, terminate altogether, so might the worst of social diseases, war. I do not much wonder that no statesman ever upheld this truth: but I do greatly that it is to be found among the tenets of no philosopher. We women, who are liable to the worst outrages, and are framed by nature to the greatest susceptibility of fears, usually love war the most, until it enters our houses. We are delighted at the sound and at the spectacle from afar; and no music is more pleasing to our ears than that which is the prelude to the cries of agony and death. The Spartans are now

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ravaging all the country round about us. Will they never let me visit their celebrated city? Must I never fancy I am a Helen while I am bathing in the Eurotas or the Tiasa? I am curious to see their Skeias,* and to compare it with our Hecatompedon. It would interest me the more, because in this edifice the lyre of our countryman Timotheus is suspended. It was forfeited, you know, for his having added four strings. Woe betide those improvident creatures who add anything to our delights! But surely poor Timotheus must have fallen among the poets.

CLXXIII. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

When the war is over, as surely it must be in another year, let us sail among the islands of the Ægæan, and be young as ever. O that it were permitted us to pass together the remainder of our lives in privacy and retirement! This is never to be hoped for in Athens.

I inherit from my mother a small yet beautiful house in Tenos: I remember it well. Water, clear and cold, ran before the vestibule: a sycamore shaded the whole building. I think Tenos must be nearer to Athens than to Miletus. Could we not go now for a few days? How temperate was the air, how serene the sky, how beautiful the country! the people how quiet, how gentle, how kind-hearted!

Is there any station so happy as an uncontested place in a small community, where manners are simple, where wants are few, where respect is the tribute of probity, and love is the guerdon of beneficence. O Pericles! let us go; we can return at any time.

CLXXIV. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

The gratitude and love I owe to Pericles induces me to write the very day I have landed at Lampsacos. You are prudent, Aspasia! and your prudence is of the best quality; instinctive delicacy. But I am older than you, or than Pericles, although than Pericles by only six years; and, having no other pretext to counsel you, will rest upon this. Do not press him to abstain from public business: for, supposing he is by nature no obstinate man, yet the long possession of authority has accustomed him to grasp the tighter what is

* "It was of a circular form, with a roof like an umbrella, and erected about 760 years B.C." *St. John's Ancient Greece.* The most learned, the most comprehensive, and the most judicious work ever written about the manners, the institutions, and the localities of that country.

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touched; as shell-fish contract the claws at an atom. The simile is not an elegant one, but I offer it as the most apposite. He might believe that you fear for him, and that you wish him to fear: this alone would make him pertinacious. Let everything take its season with him. Perhaps it is necessary that he should control the multitude: if it is, he will know it; even you could not stir him, and would only molest him by the attempt. Age is coming on. This will not loosen his tenacity of power . . . it usually has quite the contrary effect . . . but it will induce him to give up more of his time to the studies he has always delighted in, which however were insufficient for the full activity of his mind. Mine is a sluggard: I have surrendered it entirely to philosophy, and it has made little or no progress: it has dwelt pleased with hardly anything it has embraced, and has often run back again from fond prepossessions to startling doubts: it could not help it.

But as we sometimes find one thing while we are looking for another, so, if truth escaped me, happiness and contentment fell in my way, and have accompanied me even to Lampsacos.

Be cautious, O Aspasia! of discoursing on philosophy. Is it not in philosophy as in love? the more we have of it, and the less we talk about it, the better. Never touch upon religion with anybody. The irreligious are incurable and insensible; the religious are morbid and irritable: the former would scorn, the latter would strangle you. It appears to me to be not only a dangerous, but, what is worse, an indelicate thing, to place ourselves where we are likely to see fevers and phrenzies, writhings and distortions, debilities and deformities. Religion at Athens is like a fountain near Dodona, which extinguishes a lighted torch, and which gives a flame of its own to an unlighted one held down to it. Keep yours in your chamber; and let the people run about with theirs; but remember, it is rather apt to catch the skirts. Believe me, I am happy: I am not deprived of my friends. Imagination is little less strong in our later years than in our earlier. True, it alights on fewer objects, but it rests longer on them, and sees them better. Pericles first, and then you, and then Meton, occupy my thoughts. I am with you still; I study with you, just as before, although nobody talks aloud in the schoolroom.

This is the pleasantest part of life. Oblivion throws her light coverlet over our infancy; and, soon after we are out of the cradle

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we forget how soundly we had been slumbering, and how delightful were our dreams. Toil and pleasure contend for us almost the instant we rise from it: and weariness follows whichever has carried us away. We stop awhile, look around us, wonder to find we have completed the circle of existence, fold our arms, and fall asleep again.

CLXXV. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Proxenos, a native of Massilia, is lately come over to visit his relations and correspondents. The Phocæans, you know, were the founders of Lampsacos, long before they were driven by the invasion of Cyrus into Italy and Gaul. Like the generality of mercantile men, Proxenos is little attached to any system of philosophy, but appears to hold in some esteem the name and institutions of Pythagoras. Formerly we have conversed together with Pericles on this extraordinary man, regretting that so little is known of him in the midst of his celebrity. Hardly a century hath elapsed since he left his native Samos, and settled on the peaceful shores of Italy. His presence, his precepts, his authority, his example, were unavailing to the preservation of that tranquillity, which the beauty of the climate, the fertility of the soil, and the freedom of the institutions, ought to have established and perpetuated. But it is in the regions of the earth as in the regions of the air; the warm and genial are absorbed by the cold and void, and tempests and storms ensue. The happiness of thousands is the happiness of too many, in the close calculation of some inexpert contriver; and he spoils the honey by smoking the hive. No sooner is a nation at ease, than he who should be the first to participate in the blessing, is the most uneasy; and, when at last he has found a place to his mind, before he lies down he scratches a hole in it, as the dogs do. Such had been the case at Samos, and such was likewise the case at Croton. The difference lay merely in this. Polycrates was a man of abilities, and capable of holding the government in his single hand; he loved power, he loved pleasure, he contented the populace, and he reconciled the wise: Croton was subject to the discretion of an oligarchy, incompetent, arrogant, jealous, and unjust. It is untrue that Pythagoras was ever at enmity with him, or was treated by him with disrespect. The one was as fond of authority as the other, and neither was willing to divide it. Whatever could be done to promote the studies of the philosopher was done spontaneously by the chief magistrate, who gave him

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letters of recommendation to the king of Egypt. By these, and perhaps by these only, could he ever have penetrated into the innermost recesses of the priesthood. Conversing with them, and observing their power over the people, he lost nothing of his inclination to possess the same, and added much to the means of acquiring it. Epimenides the Cretan was perhaps the exemplar he had resolved to follow, but with mitigated severity. Solon with all his wisdom, and never had mortal more, was unable to bring back the Athenians to the simplicity and equity of their forefathers. Knowing well their propensity to superstition, which always acts with its greatest intensity on the cruel and the loose, he invited Epimenides to come and overawe them by his sanctity and his sacrifices. We can not doubt that he left the whole management of their conversion to the discretion of the stranger. An Epimenides, in all ages of the world, will possess more influence than a Solon. Lustrations and sacrifices followed prodigies and omens; and among the marvels and miracles which the Cretan seer displayed, the last was the greatest in the eyes of Athens. He announced his determination to return home, and refused all the honours and riches the people would have lavished on him. Epimenides wanted nothing: the Gods were less moderate; they required a human victim. Cratinos was too happy in devoting his blood at the altar; Ctesibias, on the bosom of his friend.

Proxenos is cŏme in by appointment and has broken off an old story which you know as well as I do. I will give you his; but not without an account from you in return, of what is going on among the craft at Athens.

CLXXVI. ASPASIA TO ANAXAGORAS.

Secrecy and mystery drive the uninitiated into suspicion and distrust: an honest man never will propose, and a prudent man never will comply with, the condition. What is equitable and proper lies wide open on the plain, and is accessible to all, without an entrance through labyrinth or defile. I do not love Pythagoras nor Epimenides, nor indeed my friend Socrates so much as perhaps I should, who however, beside his cleverness, has many good qualities. He, like Pythagoras, is endowed with an extraordinary share of intellect; but neither of them has attained the fixed and measured scope of true philosophy: the one being in perpetual motion to display his surprising tricks of rhetorical ingenuity, which tend only

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to the confusion of truth and falsehood, and consequently to indifference in the choice of them; the other was no less active and restless in the acquisition and maintenance of power. The business of philosophy is to examine and estimate all those things which come within the cognizance of the understanding. Speculations on any that lie beyond are only pleasant dreams, leaving the mind to the lassitude of disappointment. They are easier than geometry and dialectics; they are easier than the efforts of a well-regulated imagination in the structure of a poem. These are usually held forth by them as feathers and thistle-down; yet condescend they nevertheless to employ them; numerals as matter and mind; harmony as flute and fiddle-strings to the dances of the stars. In their compositions they adopt the phraseology and curtsey to the cadences of poetry. Look nearer; and what do you see before you? the limbs of Orpheus, bloodless, broken, swollen, and palpitating on the cold and misty waters of the Hebrus. Such are the rhapsodical scraps in their visionary lucubrations. They would poison Homer, the purest and soundest of moralists, the most ancient and venerable of philosophers, not out of any ill-will to him, but out of love to the human race. There is often an enchantment in their sentences, by which the ear is captivated, and against which the intellectual powers are disinclined to struggle; and there is sometimes, but very rarely, a simplicity of manner, which wins like truth. But when ambition leads them toward the poetical, they fall flat upon thorny ground. No writer of florid prose ever was more than a secondary poet. Poetry, in her high estate, is delighted with exuberant abundance, but imposes on her worshipper a severity of selection. She has not only her days of festival, but also her days of abstinence, and, unless upon some that are set apart, prefers the graces of sedateness to the revelry of enthusiasm. She rejects, as inharmonious and barbarous, the mimicry of her voice and manner by obstreperous sophists and argute grammarians, and she scatters to the winds the loose fragments of the schools.

Socrates and his disciples run about the streets, pick up every young person they meet with, carry him away with them, and prove to him that everything he ever heard is false, and everything he ever said was foolish. He must love his father and mother in their way, or not at all. The only questions they ask him are those which they know he can not answer, and the only doctrines they inculcate are

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those which it is impossible he should understand. He has now fairly reached sublimity, and looks of wonder are interchanged at his progress. Is it sublime to strain our vision into a fog? and must we fancy we see far because we are looking where nobody can see farther?

CLXXVII. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

The Massilian is intelligent and communicative. Some matters which he related at our conference you will perhaps remember in Herodotus: others are his own story; so let him tell the whole in his own manner.

"The unbroken force of Persia was brought under the walls of Phocæa. Harpagos, equally wise and generous, offered to our citizens the most favourable terms of surrender. They requested one day for deliberation. Aware of their intentions, he dissembled his knowledge, and allowed them to freight their ships, embark, and sail away. His clemency was however no security to his garrison. Within a few days the expatriated citizens landed again, slew every Persian within the walls, then, casting a mass of iron into the sea, swore they would never return a second time until it rose and floated on the surface. Some historians would persuade us that, after this cruel vengeance, this voluntary and unanimous oath, the greater part returned. Such a tale is idle and absurd. The Persians would too surely have inflicted due vengeance on their perfidy. Some however did indeed separate from the main body of the emigration, and came to reside here in Lampsacos, which their ancestors had founded, and where they continued on the most hospitable terms by frequent intermarriages. The bulk of the expedition reached Alalia, a colony of theirs, led recently into Corsica. Here they continued to reside but a little time unmolested by the jealousy of the Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians. Undaunted by the coalition against them, and by the loss of many ships in a battle with the united fleet of the confederates, they sailed to the neighbourhood of the more ancient Grecian cities, and founded Elea, near Poseidonia. And now probably they first became acquainted with the disciples of Pythagoras. He himself, it is said, retired to Metaponton, and died there. When he went from Samos to Croton he was in the vigour of life; and not many years elapsed ere he beheld the overthrow of his institutions. He is reported by some to have attained an extreme old age,

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which his tranquillity and temperance rendered probable. Even without this supposition, he may perhaps have visited the coast of Gaul, before or after the arrival of the Phocæans. Collecting, we may imagine, additional forces from the many Ionians whom the generals of Cyrus had expelled, they began to build the city of Massilia, not long after the settlement at Elea, which the vicinity of powerful states, and its incapacity and insecurity for the mooring of a navy, rendered ineligible as the seat of government, or as a constant station."

Thus much I had collected from Proxenos, when he began to give me information on anchorages and harbours, imports and exports: I could not in common civility interrupt him, or ask anything better than what it pleased him to bestow on me. As our acquaintance strengthens, I will draw more unreservedly from his stores.

CLXXVIII. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Proxenos runs into some errors both in regard to facts and motives. It is false that Pythagoras, on returning from his voyage in Egypt, was indignant at finding a tyrant in his native city. Polycrates was in possession of the supreme power when the philosopher left the island, and used it with clemency and discretion. The traveller might have gone and might have returned with discontent, but indignation is averse to favours, and these he was by no means reluctant to accept. Finding he could not be the principal man among his fellow-citizens, he resolved to attain that rank where the supremacy was yet unoccupied. He had seen enough of the Egyptian and heard enough of the Indian priesthood, to convince him that, by a system somewhat similar to theirs, absolute power was more attainable and more safe. He took lessons and precautions; and wherever there was a celebrated and ancient temple, he visited its priests, and explored the origin and conduct of their institutions and authority. In recompense for these, he is reported to have raised his tunic to the holy ones at Olympia, and to have displayed a golden thigh. Nothing so royal, so godlike, had been seen since the reign of Pelops. A golden thigh is worth an ivory shoulder. Such a miracle, we may be sure, was not altogether lost upon the prophetess at Delphi, the fair Themistocleia, who promulgated to him her secrets in return.

His doctrines were kept within his own circle, under the safeguard

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of an oath. This in all countries is and ought to be forbidden, as being the prerogative of the magistracy. Love of supremacy was the motive in all his injunctions and in all his actions. He avoided the trouble of office and the danger of responsibility: he excluded the commons, and called to him the nobles, who alone were deemed worthy of serving him. Among these he established an equality, which, together with the regularity and frugality of their living, must have tended to conciliate and gratify in some measure the poorer citizens. Certain kinds of animal food were forbidden, as in India and other countries less remote, but, contrary to what we have often heard asserted, no species of pulse or vegetable. '*Abstain from the bean*' signified '*abstain from elections to political employments.*' The teacher was in the place of parent to his disciples, who appear to have renounced all the natural affections that had sprung up before they entered the society. His regimen was mild and generous: its principal merit was, however, the repression of loquacity; common in the ardour of youth after its chase in the fields of knowledge; commoner, and more unbecoming, in the morose repose of an arrogant philosophy. The history of Pythagoras, forasmuch as he interests us in being the leader of a sect and of a party, is neither long nor obscure. The commons of Croton soon began to perceive that, under his management, the sons of the aristocracy would be no better inclined than their fathers had been to concede them an equal share in the government: and the rulers themselves, day after day, lost somewhat of authority in their families. During the whole time that he had resided in Italy, the people of nearly all the Greek cities heaved indignantly under oppressive oligarchies. Sybaris, whose health they were absorbing in more than Circæan luxuries, rose first upon her feet, and expelled the council of five hundred. They retired for refuge to the lords of Croton; and, when the Sybarites called for justice on them, the demand was voted an affront. And now indeed the veil of sanctity and seclusion was violently rent by the disciples of the Samian. He incited them to maintain peace and good government; pointed out to them the phantom of Freedom, how it blasted every region it past over; and adjured them to the defence of their rulers by the purity of their religion. They marched, fought a battle, won it, and Sybaris was swept from the earth.

Discord, I suspect, O Aspasia! is the readiest of all the Deities to

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appear at our invocation. The oligarchs of Croton, long accustomed to uncontrolled power and irresponsible injustice, refused to the army, now comprehending all the active citizens, even the smallest portion of the spoils. Again did the Crotoniats cry to arms; and again, and in a better cause, were conquerors. Pythagoras* and his disciples fled before them, and the hall in which they assembled was reduced to ashes.

It is only a free city that is strong; for it is only in a free city that the mass of the people can be armed.

CLXXIX. ASPASIA TO ANAXAGORAS.

Men of powerful minds, although they never give up Philosophy, yet cease by degrees to make their professions in form, and lay ultimately the presents they have received from her at the feet of History. Thus did Herodotus, thus did Hecatæus, and thus, let me hope, will Anaxagoras. The deeds of past ages are signally reflected on the advancing clouds of the future: here insurrections and wrecks and conflagrations; here the ascending, there the drooping diadem; the mighty host, the mightier man before it; and, in the serener line on the horizon, the emersion of cities and citadels over far-off seas. There are those who know in what quarter to look for them: but it is rarely to their hands the power of promoting the good, or averting the evil, is entrusted. Yet, O Anaxagoras! all is not hideous in the past, all is not gloomy in the future. There are communities where the best and wisest are not utterly cast aside, and where the robe of Philosophy is no impediment to the steps of men. Idly do our sages cry out against the poets for mistuning the heart and misgoverning the intellect. Meanwhile they themselves are occupied in selfish vanities on the side of the affections; and, on the side of the understanding, in fruitless, frivolous, indefinite, interminable disquisitions. If our thoughts are to be reduced to powder, I would rather it were for an ingredient in a love-potion, to soften with sympathies the human heart, than a charm for raising up spectres to contract and to coerce it. If dust is to be thrown into our eyes, let it be dust from under a bright enlivening sun, and not the effect of frost and wind.

CLXXX. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Philosophy is but dry bread: men will not live upon it, however wholesome: they require the succulent food and exciting cup of

* Pythagoras was a Præ-jesuit.

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Religion. We differ in bodily strength, in compactness of bone, and elasticity of sinew; but we all are subject to the same softness, and nearly to the same distemperature, in the nobler animators of the frame, the brain and blood. Thus it is in creeds: the sage and simple, the ardent enthusiast and the patient investigator, fall into and embrace with equal pertinacity the most absurd and revolting tenets. There are as many wise men who have venerated the ibis and cat, as there are who have bent their heads before Zeus and Pallas. No extravagance in devotion but is defended by some other towering above it; no falsehood but whose features are composed to the semblance of truth. By some people those things are adored that eat them; by others, those that they eat. Men must rest here: superstition, satiated and gorged, can go no farther.

The progression of souls is not unreasonable, the transmigration is. That we shall pass hereafter into many states of successive existence is credible enough; but not upon earth, not with earthly passions. Yet Pythagoras was so resolute and so unguarded, that he asserted to himself a series of lives here among men, by the peculiar and especial favour of the Gods, with a perfect consciousness of every change he had undergone. Others became dogs, wolves, bears, or peradventure men again; but knowing as little of what had happened. Nevertheless, he pretended that these transmigrations were punishments and rewards. Which is punished? the dead creature or the living? the criminal man or the guiltless animal? Some believe they can throw their sins into a fox: others (in Africa for instance) into a priest. Now the priest may have received what he esteems an equivalent: the fox is at once a creditor and a debtor, with little hope, on either side, of indemnity or balance. It is only when you or Pericles were my audience, that I ever was inclined to press hard against the inconsistencies of philosophers. But we must trace things to their origin where we can. The greater part of those now prevalent are ascribable to the school of Samos. Numerals were considered by the teacher as materials, and not only as the components, but as the elements of the world. He misunderstood his own theory: the reason is, he made it his own by theft. The young persons who are hearers of the warier Socrates, catch at it in the playground, and the ill-compacted cake crumbles under their hands.

Unfavourable as my evidence must appear, and is, I am fortunate.

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in being able to lay before you another and comelier representation of a philosopher so enriched by genius. I have always, in all companies, and upon all occasions, been sparing of my questions, and have exerted the uttermost ingenuity I am master of, in drawing the truth on, without such an instrument of torture. Probably I have lost by age a part of my dexterity, or presence of mind, or determination; for Proxenos, at the close of our conference, said aloud and sharply,

"You shall never make *that* out. I think him a very honest man; and I think nobody an honest man who thinks otherwise."

"Fair Proxenos!" I replied, "you are now greatly more than a philosopher. Some favourite God alone could have inspired all this enthusiasm. In the vigorous expression of that terse apothegm is there not somewhat more of the poet than of the Pythagorean?"

"I believe there may be," replied he, "I was always much given to poetry."

He grew instantly calm upon my compliment, and said with the most polite complacency,

"Well! I am not a match for you Half-Athenians; but read this little volume by my friend Psyllos of Metaponton; it will open your eyes, I warrant it."

"Blessings upon it then!" said I, bending over and taking it with due reverence; "many of late have done quite the contrary."

CLXXXI. PSYLLOS TO PISANDER OF ELEA.

On the Lawgiver of the Gauls, forwarded to CLEONE.

"Pisander! when last we met, I promised you I would make farther inquiries into the subject of our conversation at the house of Euryalos, and that I doubted not of success in attempting to prove the identity of Pythagoras and Samotes. Strange, that the idea should have occurred to no one else in the course of many generations. Was it not sufficiently clear for the follower of truth? or was it not sufficiently dark and intricate for the lover of mystery and paradox? I imagine it stood between both, at an equal distance from the road of each, and thus it was past unnoticed.

There is nobody then who can explain to me what was the religion of the Gauls at the time of the Phocæan emigration. Samotes is recorded as their legislator. Legislation here includes, as it necessarily must in ages of barbarism, not only the civil institutions of the

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people, but likewise the religious. Yet neither the character nor the tenets, neither the period nor the country, nor indeed the existence of Samotes, have ever been ascertained. Ask the people who he was, and they will tell you that he came to them *over the sea*, long ago. Computation of time, past and future, never occupies, never occurs to, the barbarian. It was long ago that the old tree, against which his cabin leans, sprang up; long ago since the cabin was built; long ago since he was a child. Whatever is not visible to him, or was not, has feeble hold on his memory, and never enters into his calculation. As lawgiver of the Gauls, Samotes is acknowledged to have instructed them both in the ceremony of human oblations and in the creed of the metempsychosis; for these are mentioned together in the first opening of their history. But it appears to me that the metempsychosis, which is generally held as the basis of druidism, is adventitious. We shall find that this institution is composed of two extremely different and obstinately discordant parts. One, the result of ferocity, varies but little from what exists in the early state of most nations; which diversity may be accounted for, from their climate, their wants, their habits, and pursuits. The other is engrafted on its savage stock, by the steady but not sufficiently impressive hand of a gentle and provident philosophy. You ask me when? by whom? One word will solve both questions: by Samotes; by the man of Samos. Do you doubt that he ever was in Gaul? And do you think it probable that, with his fondness for travelling, his alacrity in inquiry, he would have resided many years in Italy, and have never once visited a country so near to him, a country so singular in its customs, at least in the combination of them, *if such customs then existed*, a country on whose shores the most valiant of his own countrymen were landing? If at this early epoch the tribes of Gaul believed in the metempsychosis, would not sympathy, would not admiration, have impelled him thither? But if, on the contrary, the doctrine did not prevail, who introduced it? what author of greater weight? I am curious to learn his name or his country. Perhaps by knowing the one, we may guess the other, since the ideas he impressed and left behind him are stamped with a peculiar mark. It may be argued that, able to inculcate lastingly on the mind of his Gallic proselytes, a dogma which seems to have been received but partially, and to have soon disappeared, where he lived in the full exercise of authority, he still was unable to abolish, as he

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would wish to do, their sanguinary rites. He was: for it is easier to learn than to unlearn what incessantly works and excites and agitates our passions. The advantages of the metempsychosis were perhaps the most striking of any that could be presented to warlike minds; to which minds, you must have remarked, O Pisander, advantages will present themselves more readily than disadvantages. Beside, the Druids, whom we can not well consider at any time a very enlightened order, or likely to see every consequence, every contingency, had no direct interest in suppressing such a doctrine. New colonies were endeavouring to establish themselves in their country; and colonies are the unfailing seed of wars. For, if they flourish, they require an accession of territory; if they do not flourish, they either turn into vagabonds and robbers, or employ violence to remove the obstacles that impede their industry. Something great then and something new was wanting, since the danger that impended was both new and great. Immolations before them on one side, and the sublime view of the metempsychosis on the other, what could either shake the confidence or abate the courage of the Gauls? A new body was new armour, beautiful, strong, in which they would elude the rage and laugh at the impotence of War. It was delightful to try other scenes of existence, to extinguish their burning wounds in the blood of their enemies, and to mount from the shields of their comrades into fresh life and glory.

A religion thus compounded is absurd and contradictory, but contradiction and absurdity in religion are not peculiar to barbarians. The sacrifice of a human victim was deemed the most solemn and important duty, and they would rather abandon any other ceremony than this. They were savage; we are civilised: they fought, and their adversaries were to share their immortality; we fight to make others as abject as ourselves. They had leaders of proud spirit who raised them to the heavens: we have heavy oligarchs who bend us to the earth.

Rituals, in even the less ardent and intractable, are not soon, nor easily, nor all at once, resigned. We must cease then to marvel that the most impressive, the most awful, and perhaps the most universal of devotions, human sacrifice, should not have been overthown by the declining years of Pythagoras.* It is true he retained his faculties to the last; he retained also the energy of his mind; but the voluntary exile of Samos was purely a lawgiver in philosophy.

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His religion was not intolerant nor intrusive, but mainly adapted to the humbler offices of temperance and peace. Beyond this, little is known and much is feigned of him. It would have been well if historians had related to us more of what he did, and less of what he did not. If, instead of the story of his dying in a bean-field, through horror of its impurity, they had carefully traced and pointed out his travels, they would neither have mentioned his voyage to India* nor have omitted his voyage to Gaul. The priests on the Nile were at all times well acquainted with their brethren on the Indus and Ganges; and indeed I believe that all the great temples of the world have secret communications. Do not lift up your hands, my good Pisander! not underground, not magical, but opened from time to time, in cases of difficulty and danger, through confidential agents.†

All religions, in which there is no craft nor cruelty, are pleasing to the immortal Gods; because all acknowledge their power, invoke their presence, exhibit our dependence, and exhort our gratitude. Therefore let us never be remiss in our duty of veneration to those holy men, who not only manifest their good-will toward such as think and worship with them, but also toward the stranger at the steps of other altars. While orators and poets, and philosophers too, are riotous and quarrelsome, malicious and vindictive, Religion leads to herself, and calls her own, the priests of all persuasions, who extend their hands one to another from a distance, unrestricted by jealousy and undefiled by blood.

How great, O my friend, is our consolation, in the certainty that our prayers and sacrifices are accepted! so long as the priests in our country and around us live fraternally, let us likewise be of the household. But if any devastating religion should spring up, any which rouses strife and spreads distrust, any which sunders man from man, *that* religion must be rejected by the Gods as wicked, and renounced by their worshippers as ineffectual. The claimants of such an imposition shall never have from me white flour or salt.

* If Pythagoras had visited India, the learned men who accompanied Alexander would have inquired after him, and would have given the result.

† The use of gunpowder, for instance, if not of guns, was known to the priests in countries the most distant, and of the most different religions. The army of the Macedonians was smitten by its lightnings under the walls of the Oxydracians; the Gauls, and afterward the Persians, under the temple of Delphi.

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Should you question why the milder creed had little effect in Gaul,—why the golden rules are not valued by the people as the precious relics of a departed master, I reply that in such a state of society it was impossible to bring them bodily into use. The priests alone (and it is not every priest who will readily sit down to be instructed) could profit by his knowledge of geometry, or would apply to practice or speculation his theory of numbers. A few of them are not utterly ignorant of either; and it is hence that the trickling may be traced. Men living in a state of barbarism and warfare would entertain but small respect for injunctions to abstain from any obvious and palatable food. Silence, forbearance, quietude, it can not be expected should be the inmates of a camp. Soldiers without regular supplies (in which consists the main difficulty and on which depend the main advantages in the science of war) must subsist on whatever they can seize; and men without regular government (by which I can intend no other than of magistrates chosen by the people) would, if we consider the bean as employed in ballot, be ignorant of the lax and foreign interpretation.

As the fountains of the most celebrated rivers are neither easily discoverable nor large, so it often happens that things of the greatest moment, in the political and moral world, are derived from an obscure, from a remote, and from a slender origin. I have given you my opinion on the cause of the supposition; but having heard another, however less probable, I will report it.*

In the south of Italy, where Pythagoras resided, are several cities, Tarentum in particular, of Lacedæmonian foundation. One festival of this people, whose ancestors were distinguished for frugality, was nevertheless, even in the midst of primitive Lacedæmon, even in the bosom of Temperance herself, deformed with foul excess. It was called *The Feast of the Nurses.* They carried male infants to the Temple of Diana, and, after exposing themselves among the tents where the populace was assembled, fed them with the entrails of swine, which had been sacrificed, and with figs, vetches, and *beans.* Their morals, we may believe, were not rendered more austere by the fertility and invitations of a delicious climate. At a distance from Taygetos and Cithæron, they were (allow me the expression) beyond the latitudes of checking breezes from the headlands of bluff

* *Qu.* whether any author now extant, excepting Psyllos in his epistle, mentions this.

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morality; and the voice of the Syrens sounded in ears sealed only to the call of reprehension and reproof. The hunter of Laconia would have smiled to hear them imitate his shout, and tell the trembling Sybarite, their neighbour, that such were the shouts of Spartans. He would have wondered that terror should be excited in another by that which excited only ridicule in himself; he would have stared not a little at the start from the couch, and the rustle of roses on the marble floor.

Pythagoras could not say, Abstain from the city, abstain from the fellowship of the Tarentines; it would have exasperated them against him; but he might have heard related to him some instance of sensuality which happened at this festival, and might have said briefly, yet significantly, Abstain from beans. Ordinances have often been observed and commemorated far beyond the intent and expectation of their founder. Certain it is that, formerly as at present, in the popular states of Italy, the election and rejection of magistrates were signified by beans; and no less evidently was it the interest of the philosophical stranger to dissuade his auditors from the concerns of state. This, while it procured toleration and conciliated esteem, introduced them to such habitudes of close reflection, as withheld them from being the agitators, and fitted them to become, by just degrees, the leaders of the commonwealth. After all, if they pursued any other line of conduct, *he* at least would escape uncensured, and might complete without juridical, or, what he would more have deprecated, popular molestation, his scheme of general reform.

'Abstain from beans' we have considered in a moral and political, but also in a religious point; it may easily be defended, by high authorities. However, I must express my doubts whether in the lifetime of Pythagoras his followers abstained from this article of food. Is it not probable that those who came after him took the letter for the spirit, as we know it to have happened in some other doctrines, and within a century from the founder's death? To abstain with rigour from things indifferent (and from some indeed they did abstain), may not appear consistent with the exercise of reason. Arrogant it may be thought in him who commanded, and infantine in those who obeyed. But, in the religions which have continued the longest, certain foods (it is said) are prohibited; and the observance of such prohibition is the moral cause of their duration. He who will not obey in what is easy, will not obey in what is diffi-

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cult: but the subjects of these theocratical governments are every day refreshed with the exercise of salutary compliance. At the moment when a sense of duty is liable to be extinguished in others, in them it is sure to be excited: there is piety if they fast; if they satisfy their hunger there is piety. It appears to me, that the wisest and most provident of oriental legislators are in nothing more worthy of our esteem and veneration, than in the ordinance of these prohibitions. Can we ascertain what nations have, or what nations have not, been cannibals? Why does it revolt more strongly against our senses to eat a man than to kill one? The crime in itself is surely not so great. Nature has fixed certain barriers, of which many seem fancifully chosen and arranged, against the irruption of our appetites. There are animals never brought upon our tables, although the flesh is said to be wholesome and the flavour grateful. It is needless to seek how first it happened that man violated the semblance of himself and of his Gods. Was it war, was it fanaticism, or was it famine, that impelled him to the accursed sacrifice? Pisander! Pisander! he had tasted the fatness of the lamb that he carried in his bosom: he had tempted the fawn by caresses from afar: it had licked his hand, and he had shed its blood!

Cannibals have been found where food was plentiful: and the savage does not loathe for its ugliness the hugest serpent. There must be something, and it must be in the brute creation, which he shall fear to consume for the impiety of the deed.

The sacrifice of a human victim can only be performed with the concurrence of prince or magistracy. Of course Pythagoras could not oppose it, consistently with his profession of abstaining from their concerns. Nevertheless he was at liberty to introduce a doctrine which, as the day of cultivation advanced, would undermine the pyre and release the victim. The Druids were, and are, and always will be, barbarous. Their order has not existed long, and will soon terminate, the Gauls being not only the most ferocious of mankind, but the most suspicious and acute; they are also the most versatile, the most inconstant, and (what makes sad work with solemnities), on the detection of halt or blemish, men of irrepressible mimicry and unquenchable derision. Those in the vicinity of Massilia are free already from the furies of fanaticism. Intercourse with the Tyrrhenians and Ligurians has humanised them greatly, and the softer voice of Ionia has now persuaded them, that the Gods can take us when

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they want us, without wicker baskets; and that the harp and dance are as pleasant to them as the cries and agonies of dying men."

Thus ends the epistle of Psyllos; and at least in the end of it I think we shall agree. His comfits will sweeten my pomegranate.

CLXXXII. ASPASIA TO ANAXAGORAS.

Whatever may be the partiality of your Massilian to Pythagoras, it is evident enough that the philosopher of Samos, possessing great acquired intelligence and gifted with extraordinary powers of mind, was an intriguer and an impostor. And truly, O Anaxagoras, it is much to be desired that others now living were exempt from a certain part of such an imputation. Our friend Socrates, I am sorry to say, intimates to his friends in private that he has a kind of Genius always at his ear, who forewarns him in affairs apparently the most indifferent. If we consider it well, we shall be of opinion that there are few things so indifferent as they seem to us; few, the consequence of which may not, visibly or invisibly, act with grave importance on the future. But if a Genius, a superhuman power, were to influence the actions of any man, surely it would be those which must necessarily put in motion the levers and regulators of a commonwealth. We are all under the guidance of a Deity if we will let him act on us; but it is as easy to slip from under his guidance, as it is difficult to escape from the penalties of our error. Already there are some who are jealous of Socrates and his Genius; and who perhaps may try hereafter whether the Genius will help him to elude the laws. For novelties in religion, as you know, are not held guiltless; and a Genius that renders a man wiser or better is indeed an innovator. As they can not catch him, I fear they may lay their hands upon our Socrates.

CLXXXIII. ANAXAGORAS TO PERICLES.

It is easier to answer the questions than the kindnesses of your letter. I will begin then.

We have not two factions; aristocracy has kept aloof from Lampsacos. The people find themselves so secure and comfortable under the ancient laws, that they would no more hazard any innovation, than they would alter their course at sea when they were sailing with a favourable wind. They hardly can be brought to believe that any nation hath abrogated two laws in twenty or thirty years, or hath

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been obliged by prosperity or adversity to enact so many in so brief a space of time. Miletus was always just to her colonies. She has founded more than sixty; and not a single one has ever had reason to complain of her exactions or restrictions. All the great empires that have existed in the world, Chaldæa, Babylonia, Media, Persia, all these taken together, have not sent out the hundredth part of what has gone forth from the bosom of Miletus. Surely, of political glory this is the highest: to rear carefully a numerous family, educate it honestly, protect it bravely, and provide for it plenteously and independently. Her citizens have more reason to be proud of this section in their polity, than some others who are much powerfuller. Would not every mother wish to see her own features in her daughter? her own constitutional strength, her own character, her own prosperity? What inconsistency then, what folly, what madness, for the metropolis to wish otherwise in regard to her colony! Is the right arm stronger by rendering the left weaker? Gain we any vantage-ground against our enemy by standing on the prostrate body of our child?

To whom am I writing? to Pericles? yes, to him; to the man who best knows that the strongest reasons of state proceed from the mouth of justice.

And now let me loose again. Seldom have I written, and never have I spoken, so long at a time on such a subject. Could you ever draw from me even an opinion on these matters, in a city where (excepting myself) you alone preserved in them your calmness, equanimity, and composure? Even Aspasia, who unites the wisdom of the heart to the wisdom of the understanding, and has more in both than any one else in either, was sometimes in perturbation at politics, and sometimes in grief.

A while since I sent her a dozen or more of such verses as our young people, and others who should know better, are idle enough to compose in the open air. My neighbour, Proxenos the Massilian, has been employed in making a collection from the gardens round about. The greater part, he tells me, are upon love and flowers, dews and suns, stars and moons, evenings and mornings, springs and autumns. He observes that summer is rather out of favour with the poets; and that where winter is mentioned, he has often found the whole composition scored across with a nail, or with a piece of tile, or defaced in some other way as nigh at hand. Proxenos is no

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poet, and therefore it is the more amusing to hear him discourse on poetry.

"I am sated with flowers," said he. "The Muses ought to keep out of the market: if they must come into it, let them not come as greengrocers. See, what a large proportion in my collection is upon flowers and foliage, with here and there a solitary turtle-dove, and a nightingale deplorably belimed. A few pious men indeed have written in reverence of the tutelary God, and have done all they could to repress the licentiousness of the young and thoughtless. The best inscription I have found among them is in the garden of Mnestheus; and this perhaps is worth preservation rather for its grave admonition and religious sentiment than its poetry."

So far Proxenos, I do not remember what were those verses I sent to Aspasia; there may be more good sense in these,

INSCRIPTION ON A PLINTH IN THE GARDEN OF MNESTHEUS AT LAMPSACOS.

Youngsters! who write false names, and slink behind
The honest garden-god to hide yourselves,
Take heed unto your ways! the worshipful
Requires from all upright straightforwardness.
Away, away then subterfuge with him!
I would not chide severely; nor would he,
Unless ye thwart him; for alike we know
Ye are not childisher than elder folk,
Who piously (in doing ill) believe
That every God sees every man . . but one.

CLXXXIV. ASPASIA TO ANAXAGORAS.

The style of your Psyllos is, I presume, Massilian. He walks heavily through high-stemmed leafy flowers. Does he not deserve now this little piece of imitation?

Forbear to call it mockery; for mockery is always rude and inhumane.

Our friend Socrates has taken a wife. In every danger he has been thought singularly brave; and, if she is what she is represented, the action proves it. He retains his custom of sitting in the porticoes, and beckoning to passers, and conversing on loveliness, and commending equanimity, and driving the schoolmen mad. Yet among the Epithalamions, the cleverest is one which celebrates him for the quality most remote from his character. Thales and Pherecydes and

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Pythagoras, and some few more, would really have made Philosophy domestic. Our epithalamiast, intending nothing satirical, tells Socrates (whom neither celibacy nor marriage have detained at home, and who never could resist an opportunity of wrangling, while a sophist or a straw was before him) that he first brought Philosophy from heaven into private houses! I hope he will find her in his own as often as he wants her: but if he is resolved to bring her down into ours, such as we have seen her lately, the city will be all in a bustle with the double-bolting of doors.

Let the archons look to it.

CLXXXV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I have been exhorting Pericles to leave Attica for a while, and to enjoy with me the pleasures of retirement in the little isle of Tenos. He listened to my entreaty with his usual attention and interest, and soon began to expatiate on the charms, on the benefits, oh the necessity, of retirement. Without a question I fancied I had persuaded him to compliance, when, with an air of sadness so attempered with sweetness as it never was in any other man, he said to me, "Aspasia! you can create in me as many wishes as spring up in the bosom of a child; and it is partly by planting the slips of your own in mine, and partly by the warmth of your eloquence. What then must be my sense of duty to my country, if, after all these representations, and after all my fatigues and injuries, my determination is fixed to remain some time longer in the city. Hereafter we may visit Tenos: hereafter I may drink of the limpid brook, before the house, whose cold water has reddened this hand when you were little. We will build our navies on it: we will follow them along the bank, and applaud them as they clash. Even I foresee a perfidy in Aspasia: she will pretend to run as fast as she can, and yet let Pericles outrun her. No, no; that kiss shall not obviate such duplicity. Have I no reason for the suspicion, when you often have let me get the better of you in argument? Another and easier life may await us there, when this political one is uncoiled from us. But our child must associate with the children of the Athenians: he must love his father's friends; he must overcome and pardon his father's adversaries. We ought never to buy happiness with our children's fortunes: but happiness is not the commodity; it is desertion, it is evasion, it is sloth. However, there is at last a time when we may

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hang up our armour, and claim the stipend of retirement and repose. Meanwhile let us fix our eyes on Tenos."

Whether, O Cleone, we regard the moral or the material world, there is a silent serenity in the highest elevation. Pericles appears the greater when seen on his solitary eminence against the sky. Power has rendered him only more gracious and compliant, more calm and taciturn.

CLXXXVI. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Pericles tells me that you are less tranquil than you were formerly, and that he apprehends you are affected not a little by the calumnies of your enemies.

If it is true that there can be no calumny without malice, it is equally so that there can be no malice without some desirable quality to excite it. Make up your mind, Aspasia, to pay the double rate of rank and genius. It is much to be the wife of Pericles; it is more to be Aspasia. Names that lie upon the ground are not easily set on fire by the torch of Envy, but those quickly catch it which are raised up by fame, or wave to the breeze of prosperity. Every one that passes is ready to give them a shake and a rip; for there are few either so busy or so idle as not to lend a hand at undoing.

You, Pericles, and myself, have a world of our own, into which no Athenian can enter without our permission. Study, philosophise, write poetry. These things I know are difficult when there is a noise in the brain; but begin, and the noise ceases. The mind, slow in its ascent at first, accelerates every moment, and is soon above the hearing of frogs and the sight of brambles.

CLXXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

A pestilence has broken out in the city, so virulent in its character, so rapid in its progress, so intractable to medicine, that Pericles, in despite of my remonstrances and prayers, insisted on my departure. He told me that, if I delayed it a single day, his influence might be insufficient to obtain me a reception in any town, or any hamlet, throughout the whole of Greece. He has promised to write to me daily, but he declared he could not assure me that his letters would come regularly, although he purposes to send them secretly by the shepherds, fumigated and dipped in oil before they depart from Athens. He has several farms in Thessaly under Mount Ossa, near

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Sicurion. Here I am, a few stadions from the walls. Never did I breathe so pure an air, so refreshing in the midst of summer. And the lips of my little Pericles are ruddier and softer and sweeter than before. Nothing is wanting, but that he were less like me, and more like his father. He would have all my thoughts to himself, were Pericles not absent.

CLXXXVIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! I will not allow either the little Pericles, or the great one, or both together, to possess all your thoughts. Nay, your letter itself contradicts you. Cleone and the plague must intercept and divide them occasionally.

Pestilences are maladies that rage with more violence than others, but, like all violent things, soon pass away. The worst effects of them are the seditions, and other sad irregularities, that always burst forth when the banner of Death is unfurled in a populous city. But it is mostly the intemperate that are swept away.

Alas! I must not dissemble the magnitude of the danger; for I know your resolution, I might say rashness. What I have written is true; but I am most afraid that you will not fear enough. Keep up your courage where you are; do not exert it anywhere else.

CLXXXIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Cleone! Cleone! if you could but see Athens, you would find it a ditch to throw all your dogmas into. The pestilence has not only seized the intemperate, but, like that which Chryses imprecated on the Greeks before Troy, smitten nobler heads after the viler. Pericles himself has not escaped it. He refused to abstain from appearing in the assemblies of the people, and among the consultations to regulate (as far as might be) the burial and burning of the dead. His temperance and courage, the most efficacious preservatives against contagion, failed at length in the effect. The fever seized him, and although he has risen from his bed free from all symptoms of the distemper, his strength is impaired, and many years (he tells me) seem to have crowded into a few days.

CXC. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Behold, O Aspasia! I send you verses. They certainly are less valuable than some in your collection, but, to make up the difference, I enclose a cockle-shell.

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Beauty! thou art a wanderer on the earth,
And hast no temple in the fairest isle
Or city over-sea, where Wealth and Mirth
And all the Graces, all the Muses, smile.

Yet these have always nurst thee, with such fond,
Such lasting love, that they have followed up
Thy steps thro' every land, and placed beyond
The reach of thirsty Time thy nectar-cup.

Thou art a wanderer, Beauty! like the rays
That now upon the platan, now upon
The sleepy lake, glance quick or idly gaze,
And now are manifold and now are none.

I have call'd, panting, after thee, and thou
Hast turn'd and look'd and said some pretty word,
Parting the hair, perhaps, upon my brow,
And telling me none ever was preferr'd.

In more than one bright form hast thou appear'd,
In more than one sweet dialect hast spoken:
Beauty! thy spells the heart within me heard,
Griev'd that they bound it, grieves that they are broken.

All the verbiage which you will find below I found rudely scrawled on a stone-table, in the garden of my next neighbour Parmenio. I perceive it to be of little worth by this; it has found an imitator, or rather a correspondent: yet, as he writes angrily, it may not be much amiss.

These are scratched under the preceding.

I have some merit too, old man!
And show me greater if you can.
I always took what Beauty gave,
Nor, when she snatch'd it back, look'd grave.
Us modest youths it most beseems
To drink from out the running streams:
Love on their banks delights to dwell . . .
The bucket of the household well
He never tugs at, thinking fit
Only to quench his torch in it.
Shameless old fellow! do you boast
Of conquests upon every coast?
I, O ye Gods! should be content
(Yea, after all the sighs I've spent,
The sighs, and, what is yet more hard,
The minas, talents, gone in nard!)

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With only one: I would confine
Meekly this homesick heart of mine
'Twixt Lampsacos and Hammon's shrine.

CXCI. ASPASIA TO ANAXAGORAS.

It is really odd enough that no temple or altar was ever dedicated to Beauty. Vengeance and other such personages, whom *we*, Anaxagoras, venture occasionally to call allegorical, have altars enow, and more than enow of worshippers.

Whatever, in your satirical mood, you may think about the cockle-shell, I shall always value it, as much nearly as the verses, and I have ordered it to be made into a clasp for them. Taunt me then as often as you please: it will be like girls pelting with roses: if there is any harm done, it is only to the fingers of the pelter.

CXCII. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Now the fever is raging, and we are separated, my comfort and delight is in our little Pericles. The letters you send me come less frequently, but I know you write whenever your duties will allow you, and whenever men are found courageous enough to take charge of them. Although you preserved with little care the speeches you delivered formerly, yet you promised me a copy of the latter, and as many of the earlier as you could collect among your friends. Let me have them as soon as possible. Whatever bears the traces of your hand, is precious to me: how greatly more precious what is imprest with your genius, what you have meditated and spoken! I shall see your calm thoughtful face while I am reading, and will be cautious not to read aloud lest I lose the illusion of your voice.

CXCIII. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

Aspasia! do you know what you have asked of me? Would you accept it, if you thought it might make you love me less? Must your affections be thus loosened from me, that the separation, which the pestilence may render an eternal one, may be somewhat mitigated? I send you the papers. The value will be small to you, and indeed would be small to others, were it possible that they could fall into any hands but yours. Remember the situation in which my birth and breeding and bent of mind have placed me: remember the powerful rivals I have had to contend with, their celebrity, their

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popularity, their genius, and their perseverance. You know how often I have regretted the necessity of obtaining the banishment of Cimon, a man more similar to myself than any other. I doubt whether he had quite the same management of his thoughts and words, but he was adorned with every grace, every virtue, and invested by Nature with every high function of the soul. We happened to be placed by our fellow-citizens at the head of two adverse factions. Son of the greatest man in our annals, he was courted and promoted by the aristocracy: I, of a family no less distinguished, was opposed to him by the body of the people. You must have observed, Aspasia, that although one of the populace may in turbulent times be the possessor of great power, it rarely has happened that he retained it long, or without many sanguinary struggles. Moroseness is the evening of turbulence. Every man after a while begins to think himself as capable of governing as one (whoever he may be) taken from his own rank. Amid all the claims and pretensions of the ignorant and discontented, the eyes of a few begin to be turned complacently toward the more courteous demeanour of some well-born citizen, who presently has an opportunity of conciliating many more, by affability, liberality, eloquence, commiseration, diffidence, and disinterestedness. Part of these must be real, part may not be. Shortly afterward he gains nearly all the rest of the citizens by deserting his order for theirs: his own party will not be left behind, but adheres to him bravely, to prove they are not ashamed of their choice, and to avoid the imputation of inconsistency.

Aspasia! I have done with these cares, with these reflections. Little of life is remaining, but my happiness will be coetaneous with it, and my renown will survive it: for there is no example of any who has governed a state so long, without a single act of revenge or malice, of cruelty or severity. In the thirty-seven years of my administration I have caused no citizen to put on mourning. On this rock, O Aspasia! stand my Propylæa and my Parthenon.

CXCIV. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Gratitude to the immortal Gods overpowers every other impulse of my breast. You are safe.

Pericles! O my Pericles! come into this purer air! live life over again in the smiles of your child, in the devotion of your

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Aspasia! Why did you fear for me the plague within the city, the Spartans round it? why did you exact the vow at parting, that nothing but your command should recall me again to Athens? Why did I ever make it? Cruel! to refuse me the full enjoyment of your recovered health! crueller to keep me in ignorance of its decline! The happiest of pillows is not that which Love first presses; it is that which Death has frowned on and past over.

CXCV. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Have you never observed, O most observant Aspasia, that there are many things which we can say in writing, and which we can not so well deliver in speech, even to our nearest friend? During all the time of my residence with you and Pericles, intimate as was our familiarity from the commencement, never once did either of you express a wish to hear the reason why I left my countrymen for strangers. The dislike I always had to relate my concerns, and to present my features for inspection, withheld me from the narrative: and delicacy withheld you from inquiry.

Come, I will live over with you now that portion of my life which I did not live with you before. I would not escape for refuge into crowds: I would not repair my fortune by hammering on the anvil in the Agora: I would not (pardon my application of our proverb at Clazomenai) make my purse of swine's ears. Such is the occupation of those who intend to profit by a public auditory.

Often had I been solicited by the worthier of the citizens to appear in public, and to take a part, if not in the administration of affairs, at least in the debates. It ill suited my temper and turn of mind. Ours, like most free cities, was divided into two factions, the aristocratical and democratical. While others were making their way forward to the head of them, I sat quietly at home, and, to relax my mind occasionally from its sustained and fixed position for loftier and purer speculations, meditated on the advantages and disadvantages of each government. No small quantity had I written at last of remarks and aphorisms: behold a specimen: 'In most cities the majority is composed of the ignorant, the idle, and the profligate. In most cities, after a time, there are enough of bad citizens to subvert good laws. Immoral life in one leader of the people is more pernicious than a whole streetful of impurities in the lower quarters of the community, seeing that streams, foul or fair, can not flow upward.'

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Be sure, Aspasia, I never promulgated such perilous doctrines. To prove that I was erroneous in the two first positions, the citizens would have poisoned or stoned me, and their orators would clearly show my unfitness to give advice, in my attempting to demonstrate no more important or novel a truth than that water can not run up a mountain. Such is the employment, such the ingenuity and sincerity of eloquence.

I was inclined to the democracy, because I knew that all government ought to be chiefly for the advantage of the many; but when I considered long and attentively its operations and effects, I began to doubt whether the people are more likely to know their interests than the aristocracy are to promote them. Immovable property is the only sure pledge for political equity, and the holders are not at all times ready to offer it. Merchants are the worst of adventurers and gamesters, because their native land is not their country. They are the sucklings of an alien, and love her best who gives them nutriment. Their preponderance in a state will invariably be its subversion.

I intended to speak of myself, but you see I can not keep to my theme; it soon tires me . . soon escapes me. The scanty streamlet has run but a little way, and is lost among the sands. A few words more, however. Before I left my country, I offered some brief observations on important matters, then in discussion, to persons in authority. Do I much over-estimate my solidity of intellect, my range of comprehension, or my clearness of discernment, in believing that all these qualities in me, however imperfect, are somewhat more than equivalent to theirs? I concealed this truth from them, if truth it be, and told them only what I thought it was their interest, and would surely be their intention, to perform. They rewarded me by suffering me to depart in peace, unanswered and unnoticed. We might imagine that advice, like manure, is only good and applicable when it has lain a long while by. He reasons ill who reasons with a bad reasoner . . he walks on chaff, and tires himself without progress and without impression. I never expostulate with the self-sufficient; but on this occasion I desired a friend of theirs to inquire of them whether they thought a conflagration in Clazomenai would only warm their baths and cook their dinners. Had I been willing to abuse my faculties, it would have been an easy matter for me to have swept them from their places, and to have assumed the highest; for the

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rapacious has no hold upon the people, and vulgar manners in the candidate for office are no recommendation even to vulgar men.

Here ended my life in my own country.

CXCVI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

It has been wisely said that Virtue hath only to be seen to be beloved: but unwisely, that Vice hath only to be seen to be hated. Certain it is that the more habituated we are to the contemplation of a pure and placid life, the more do we delight in it. I wish it were equally so that every glance at Vice loosens a feather from her plumage, and that on a nearer approach and more stedfast observation she grows hideous. Proofs to the contrary come before us every day.

Eupolis and Mnesilochos and Callias and Cratinos, like most other authors, are indifferent to any result from their writings but popularity and emolument. And we are informed here at Miletus that several of your philosophers are now employing a language, on the powers and provinces of love, far more seductive to the passions of their youthful auditors than the most indecent of theatrical ribaldry. For surely there is little seductive in a boisterous jocularity, that seizes and holds down the hand from the painfully blushing forehead, and forces the eyes to see what they would shun. Ionian manners, I am afraid, are as licentious as the Athenian: but ours are become so by our intercourse with the Persians, the Athenian by theirs with the Philosophers. It is only of late that such poisonous perfumery has had this influence on the brain; it is only since the departure of the sedate unostentatious Anaxagoras, that syllogists have snapped their fingers at experiment. Against such men the arrows of ridicule are well directed: but these arrows fall harmlessly from flowing robes; and indeed the purple dye is everywhere a panacea.

CXCVII. ANAXAGORAS TO PERICLES.

Thanks, O Pericles, for your provident care of me! Provident do I say? no, anything but that; kind, generous, profuse; but if you really saw the extent of my wants, you would only send me notice that you and those about you are well and happy.

The fever which has broken out in your city will certainly spare you if you reside in the Acropolis: and yet you tell me that you are

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resolved on taking no such precaution, lest you should appear to claim an exemption from the common peril.

What prudent men were my enemies in Athens, to send me back hither! they would not let me live nor die among them!

You have little curiosity to know anything about private men and retired places. Nevertheless I will tell you and Aspasia what is Lampsacos.

Shrimps and oysters are the lower order of the inhabitants: and these, it is pretended, have reason to complain of the aristocracy above them. The aristocracy on their side contend that such complaints are idle and unfounded; that they are well fed and well clothed, and that the worst that ever happens to them is to be taken out of their beds, and to be banded, marshalled, and embarked, in the service of their country. In few more words, we all are either fishermen or vine-dressers. I myself am a chief proprietor: my tenement is small, but my vineyard is as spacious as any about. It is nearly a hundred of my paces broad: its length I cannot tell you, for in this direction it is too steep for me to walk up it. My neighbours have informed me that there is a fine spacious view of the Hellespont and headlands from the summit. I only know that there is a noble God, a century old at the least . . he who protects our gardens and vines. An image of him stands either at the top or the bottom of every avenue in the vicinity. He frowns in many of them; yet, amid all his threats, there is in his good-humoured gravity something like a half-invitation. The boys and girls write verses under him, very derogatory to his power and dignity. They usually write them, I understand, in one another's name; just as if he could not find them out, and would not punish them in due season. Enough of this: I have somewhat less to say about myself. The people love me, for I am no philosopher here, and have scarcely a book in the house. I begin to find that eyes are valuables and books utensils. Sitting at my door, I am amused at the whistle of curlews, and at their contentions and evolutions, for a better possession than a rabble's ear. Sometimes I go down, and enjoy a slumber on the soft deep sands; an unexpected whisper and gentle flap on the face from the passing breeze awakens me, or a startling plash from the cumbersome wave as it approaches nearer. Idleness is as dear to me, reflection as intense, and friendship as warm as ever. Yes, Pericles!

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Friendship may pause, may question, may agonise, but her semblance alone can perish.

My moon is in the last quarter, and my days ought now to be serene: they are so. Be yours no less; yours and Aspasia's!

CXCVIII. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

One true and solid blessing I owe to my popularity. Seldom is it that popularity has afforded any man more than a fallacious one. Late wisdom, and dearly bought, is mine, Aspasia! But I am delaying your delight, at one moment by the hurry of my spirits, at another by the intensity of my reflections. Our Pericles is Athenian in privileges as in birth. I have obtained a law to revoke a former one enforced by me . . and felt no shame. If I could hope that other statesmen would take example from my faults, if I could hope that at any future time they would cease to be opinionative, imperious, and self-willed, mistaking the eminence of station for the supremacy of wisdom, I would entreat them to urge no measure in which might be traced the faintest sign of malice or resentment, whether in regard to parties or private men. But alas! the inferior part of man is the stronger: we cannot cut the centaur in twain: we must take him as we find him composed, and derive all the advantage we can both from his strength and his weakness.

I am growing the politician again, when I should be the husband and father.

The odious law, the weight of which I drew upon my own head,* is abrogated. The children of women not Athenian are declared free

* It is stated in every *Life of Pericles* that he obtained the enactment of it. This is incorrect. The law was an ancient one, and required fresh vigour and vigilant observance at a time when hostilities were imminent, and when many thousands were residing in the city who would otherwise have claimed a right to vote as citizens, while their connexions were to be found among the inveterate enemies or the seceding allies of Athens. Long antecedently to the administration of Pericles, it appears that at a certain age the illegitimate were assembled at Cynosarges, in the wrestling-ring dedicated to Hercules, who himself was in that predicament: and these alone entered it. On which occasion Themistocles, his mother being a Thracian, gave the earliest proof of his astuteness, by inviting some of unmixed blood and aristocratical lineage to wrestle with him. It is far from improbable that Pericles insisted the rather on the execution of this law in opposition to Cimon, whose father Miltiades had married the daughter of Oloros, a prince of Thrace, and who himself was descended also from a ruler of that nation.

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citizens. Many good men, many good mothers, have mourned the degradation of theirs through my severity.

How dear, above the sweetest of Spring, are the blossoms that appear in the less genial hours of winter! how dear, above earth, above all things upon earth (Aspasia will pardon this, whether true or false), is our little Pericles! Am I dreaming when I imagine I see this beautiful boy, with Health and Hope beside him, kneeling on the border of the tomb, and raising up from it a whole family, in long perspective! We were gone, I thought, we were lost for ever. The powerful father merged his whole progeny in utter darkness; an infant shall reclaim it.

No longer is there a cloud upon my brow! no longer is there, I am apt to think, a pestilence in Athens.

CXCIX. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Blessings on the generosity of the Athenians! blessings a thousandfold on the paternal heart of Pericles!

O Pericles! how wrong are all who do not for ever follow Love, under one form or other! There is no God but he, the framer, the preserver of the world, the pure Intelligence! All wisdom that is not enlightened and guided by him is perturbed and perverted. He will shed, O my husband, his brightest tints over our autumnal days. Were we ever happy until now? Ah yes, we were . . but undeserving. A fresh fountain opens before us, subject to no droughts, no overflowings. How gladly, how gratefully, do I offer to immortal Love the first libation!

Come hither, my sweet child! come hither to my heart! thou art man, thou art Athenian, thou art free. We are now beyond the reach, beyond the uttermost scope and vision, of Calamity.

CC. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Alcibiades is grown up to the highest beauty of adolescence. I think I should be enamoured of him were I a girl, and disengaged. No, Cleone! the so easy mention of him proves to me that I never should be. He is petulant, arrogant, impetuous, and inconsistent. Pericles was always desirous that he should study oratory, in order that it might keep him at home, gratify his vanity the most perfectly and compendiously, and render him master of his own thoughts and

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those of others. He plainly told Pericles that he could learn little from him except dissimulation.

"Even that," replied Pericles, "is useful and necessary: it proceeds from self-command. Simulation, on the contrary, is falsehood, and easily acquired by the meanest intellect. A powerful man often dissembles: he stands erect in the course of glory, with open brow but with breath suppressed: the feebler mind is ready to take refuge in its poverty, under the sordid garb of whining simulation."

He then remarked to Pericles, that his oratory was somewhat like his economy, wanting in copiousness and display.

"Alcibiades!" said my husband, "it is particularly this part of it which I could wish you to adopt. In oratory there are few who can afford to be frugal: in economy there are few who can afford to act otherwise than frugally. I am a public man, and it little becomes me to leave room for suspicion that, by managing ill my own small affairs, I may be negligent in the greater of the commonwealth. There are kingdoms in Thrace and Asia, where the cares of government are consigned to ministers or satraps, and where it shall be thought honourable and glorious in one of these functionaries to die in debt, after managing the treasury. But surely there is in this no proof whatever that he managed it discreetly: there is a fair presumption that, neglecting his household, he left the community in worse disorder. Unquestionably he was a dishonest man, to incur a debt beyond the extent of his estate. Forbearance from accumulation in his own house, is hardly to be deemed a merit by the most inconsiderate, in one who can unlock the treasury to every relative, every friend, every associate, and every dependant. Such persons will generally be found to have been gamesters and prodigals, and to have entrusted the subordinate branches of public concerns to servants, as unfaithful and improvident as those menials who administered their own: and the reigns of the princes who employed them, if recorded at all, are recorded as prodigies of expenditure, profligacy, and disaster.

"Aristides died poor: but Aristides never was rich: he threw away nothing but his good example. And was his the fault there? He was frugal, he was provident: every action he performed, every word he uttered, will excite, inform, and direct, remotest generations. Thus indeed it can not properly be said that, however now neglected, his example was thrown away. Like the seeds of plants which a

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beneficent God hath scattered throughout the earth, although many fail to come up soon after the season of their sowing, yet do they not decay and perish, but germinate in the sterilest soils many ages later. Aristides will be forefather to many brave and honest men not descended from his lineage nor his country: he will be founder of more than nations: he will give body, vitality, and activity, to sound principles. Had he merely been a philosopher, he could effect little of this; commander as he was, imperial Persia served only for a mirror to reflect his features from Attica on the world."

Alcibiades, in several parts of this discourse, had given signs of weariness and impatience. Pericles perceived it, and reverted to Aristides. At every word that was now spoken he grew more and more animated: at the close he sprang up, seized the hand of Pericles, and told him he would listen as long as he went on in that manner.

"Speak to the purpose, as you have begun to do, and about Aristides, and I shall like you better than Aspasia. I think, after all, I may perhaps let you be my teacher." He said this laughing.

My husband replied,

"I will not undertake it, Alcibiades! Peradventure I may offer you, from time to time, a little at once, some serviceable observations, some fruits of my experience: but it is only to grace and beauty that your restless intractable mind is obedient for an hour."

"Call me anything, do anything, or nothing," said the youth, "if you will only give me such a smile again."

"Go and ride into the country," said my husband, as he was rising. "If you retain your high opinion of me on your return, you will find me at leisure to continue. I leave you, for the present, with Aristides."

Away he went, without a word more to either of us. When he was out of the apartment, Pericles said, after a thoughtful and serious pause,

"He is as beautiful, playful, and uncertain, as any half-tamed young tiger, feasted and caressed on the royal carpets of Persepolis: not even Aspasia will ever quite subdue him."

CCI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

I shall never more be in fear about you, my Aspasia! Frolicsome and giddy as you once appeared to me, at no time of your life could

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Alcibiades have interested your affections. You will be angry with me when I declare to you that I do not believe you ever were in love. The renown and genius of Pericles won your imagination: his preference, his fondness, his constancy, hold, and will for ever hold, your heart. The very beautiful rarely love at all. Those precious images are placed above the reach of the Passions: Time alone is permitted to efface them; Time, the father of the Gods, and even *their* consumer.

CCII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Angry! yes indeed, very angry am I: but let me lay all my anger in the right place. I was often jealous of your beauty, and I have told you so a thousand times. Nobody for many years ever called me so beautiful as Cleone; and when some people did begin to call me so, I could not believe them. Few will allow the first to be first; but the second and third are universal favourites. We are all insurgents against the despotism of excellence.

Ah Cleone! if I could divide my happiness with you, I do think I should have much to give you. I would demand a good deal of your sound judgment for it; but you should have it. We both of us value our beauty, I suspect, less than we used to do, which is certainly wrong; for whatever we may be told, or may tell ourselves, we have rather a scantier store of it. However, we are not yet come to the last loaf in the citadel.

I did not see Alcibiades again, that day or the following. When he came to me, he told me he was ashamed of having said an uncivil thing.

"Of which are you ashamed?" said I, "O Alcibiades! for there were several not distinguished for courtesy."

"As usual, in good humour, which always punishes me," said he. "But I remember I made a rude observation on what lies within your department."

"Economy?" said I.

Before he could answer me, Pericles, informed that Alcibiades had inquired for him, entered the apartment.

"I am glad you are come in," cried he, "for, although I have taken two days to collect my courage and words, I think I shall have more of both, now you are present."

He then began his apology, which Pericles thus interrupted.

"Be prepared for chastisement: I shall impose a heavy mulct on

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your patience: I shall render an account to you of my administration, and I hope you will permit it to pass.

"I have a son, as you know, in whose character parsimony is not among the more prominent qualities. I am unwilling to shock him by it, which is always apt to occasion a rebound to the opposite side: and I am equally unwilling to offer an example or pretext for luxury and expense. My own character will permit neither. I never gave a splendid feast: I never gave a sparing entertainment: I never closed my dining-room to a man of elegant manners or of sound information. I have not the ample fortune of our cousin Cimon, who always used it magnificently: and glad am I that I have it not; for it would oblige me to receive many who must disgust me, and who would occupy more hours of my leisure than I can spare. My system of domestic life has produced me contentment and happiness. May yours, my dear Alcibiades, whether like it or unlike it, do the same!"

"Thank you!" said he carelessly, and added, "But your manner of speaking, which we first began to talk about, the other day, is proper only for yourself: in any other man it would be ridiculous. Were I to employ it, people would believe I assumed the character of Jupiter or Hermes walking among mortals. Aspasia's is good enough for me. Many think her language as pure and elegant as yours: and I have never known it enrage and terrify men as yours does."

"Study then Aspasia in preference," said he. "You possess already some of her advantages. A beautiful mouth is always eloquent: its defects are taken for tropes and figures. Let us try together which can imitate her best. Neither of us hath ever seen her out of temper, or forgetful what argument to urge first and most forcibly. When we have much to say, the chief difficulty is to hold back some favourite thought, which presses to come on before its time, and thereby makes a confusion in the rest. If you are master of your temper, and conscious of your superiority, the words and thoughts will keep their ranks, and will come into action with all their energy, compactness, and weight. Never attempt to alter your natural tone of voice; never raise it above its pitch: let it at first be somewhat low and slow. This appears like diffidence; and men are obliged to listen the more attentively, that they may hear it. Beginning with attention, they will retain it during the whole speech: but attention is with difficulty caught in the course of one.

"I am intruding a little on the province of Aspasia. If she

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approves of my advice, pursue it; if she disapproves, be sure I have spoken inconsiderately; although I fancy I have observed such effects on several occasions."

He ceased: I enforced as well as I could his admonition. But Alcibiades, with grace nearly equal, wants his gravity; and, if ever he should be his successor in the administration of the Republic, he must become so by other methods.

CCIII. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Proxenos is sailing back to Massilia. Before he left us, he collected a large cargo of *Inscriptions*, chiefly poetical. In Massilia these matters are curiosities. The people, who can not have them fresh, are glad to accept them dry, although, according to Proxenos, they are little acute in relishing or distinguishing them.

In his last conversation with me, he gave evidence that, should he ever fail as a merchant, he hopes to make his fortune as a critic. Among his remarks was this.

"I can not for my life imagine why Zephyr is such a favourite with the poets."

I answered that we Ionians were always shy of him; but that in other parts, and especially toward Gaul and Italy, he certainly was better behaved.

"Better behaved!" cried Proxenos. "By the Twins! he hath split my sail more than once."

To comfort him, I replied: "He has done that with his best friends, O Proxenos!"

"And no longer ago," continued he, "than last Boedromion, he carried off my nether garment that was drying upon deck."

"Ah! there," said I, "mischievous as he is, he could not do the same to them without homicide: few of them have one to spare."

At the recollection of his superior wealth and dignity, he grew composed again. The Gods grant him a prosperous voyage! Ere this letter shall reach Athens, he must be almost as far as Cythera. What labours and perils do seafaring men undergo! What marvels are ships! They travel in a month farther than the fleetest horse can do; to such perfection have they been brought, and such confidence is there now in human courage and skill. As there hath been little or no improvement in them for some centuries, we may suppose

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that, contrary to all other inventions, the ingenuity of mortals can do nothing more for them.

I forgot to mention of Proxenos, what may-be it were better not to mention at all, that he is reported to have broken off the extremity of a leaf or two on some curious old vases, and a particle of a volute* from a small column at the corner of a lane. Nothing can so distinctly prove, say the Lampsacenes, that Proxenos has a few drops of barbarian blood in him. Genuine Greeks may travel through all the world, and see every vase, every column, every statue, worth seeing in its whole circumference, without a thought of mutilation. Those people who can not keep their hands from violating the purest works of ancient days, ought, if there are not too many of them, to be confined in separate cages, among the untameable specimens of zoology.

The Lampsacenes, you see by this, are not averse to protect the Arts.

CCIV. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

I have found eight verses, of which I send you only the four last. So entirely do they express what I have felt, it seems as if I myself had composed them.

They who tell us that love and grief are without fancy and invention, never knew invention and fancy, never felt grief and love.

> The thorns that pierce most deep are prest
> Only the closer to the breast:
> To dwell on them is now relief,
> And tears alone are balm to grief!

You perhaps will like these better, Aspasia! though very unlike in sentiment and expression.

* One Eyles Irwin, who was not poor nor quite uneducated, tells us in his *Travels* that he broke off a volute *as a relic* from what was called Pompey's Pillar. This happened so lately as the last century. We are, it seems, about to remove from Egypt the obelisk named Cleopatra's Needle. Do we believe that Egypt is never to come to life again? It may be some hundreds, it may be some thousands of years: but these are to the glories of Egypt as pounds are to our national debt . . itself so glorious, and of which the formation has constituted our glorious men! Are we sure that the Genius who created these eternal works, derives no portion of his beatitude from the hourly contemplation of them, in the country where they were formed and fixed?

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Pyrrha! your smiles are gleams of sun
That after one another run
Incessantly, and think it fun.

Pyrrha! your tears are short sweet rain
That glimmering on the flower-lit plain
Zephyrs kiss back to heaven again.

Pyrrha! both anguish me: do please
To shed but (if you wish me ease)
Twenty of those, and two of these.

CCV. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Ships are passing and repassing through the Hellespont all hours of the day; some of them from the Piræus, urging the allies of Athens to come forward in her defence; others from the Peloponese, inciting them to rise up in arms, and at once to throw off allegiance.

Would there be half this solicitude in either of the belligerents to be virtuous and happy, supposing it possible to persuade the one or the other that she might be, and without an effort? supposing it, in other words, to be quite as easy and pleasant to receive a truth as an untruth. Would these mariners and soldiers, and those statesmen who send them out, exert half the anxiety, half the energy and prowess, to extinguish the conflagration of a friend's house in the neighbourhood, as they are exerting now to lay in ashes all the habitations that lie beyond it? And such are brave men, such are wise men, such are the rulers of the world! Well hath it been said by some old poet,

Men let themselves slide onward by degrees
Into the depths of madness; one bold spring
Back from the verge, had saved them; but it seems
There dwells rare joy within it! O thou Sire
Of Gods and mortals, let the blighting cloud
Pass over me! O grant me wholesome rest
And innocent uprisings, although call'd
The only madman on thy reeling earth!

CCVI. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

It is well that you are removed from the city, and that the enemies of Athens pay respect either to your birth-place or your wisdom, either to your celebrity or your confidence. I remember that, speaking of the human form and countenance, both as existing in life and

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represented in the ideal, you remarked that the perfection of beauty is what is farthest from all similitude to the brutes. Surely then, in like manner, the perfection of our moral nature is in our remoteness from all similitude to their propensities. Now the worst propensity of the worst beasts is bloodshed, for which we pursue them as nearly as we can to extermination, but which they never commit with so little urgency, or to so great an extent, as we do. Until we bring ourselves at least to an equality with them, we can hardly be said to have made much progress in wisdom. It will appear wonderful and perhaps incredible to future generations, that what are now considered the two highest gifts of man, oratory and poetry, should be employed, the one chiefly in exciting, the other in emblazoning, deeds of slaughter and devastation. If we could see, in the nature of things, a child capable of forming a live tiger, and found him exercising his power of doing it, I think we should say to him,

"You might employ your time better, child!"

But then, Aspasia, we must not be orators nor poets, nor hope for any estimation in the state. Beware how you divulge this odd opinion; or you may be accused, as before, of crimes against the purity of morals, against the customs of our forefathers, and against the established and due veneration of the Gods. I hardly know what I am treading on, when I make a single step toward philosophy. On sand I fear it is; and, whether the impression be shallow or profound, the eternal tide of human passions will cover and efface it. There are many who would be vexed and angry at this, and would say, in the bitterness of their hearts, that they have spent their time in vain. Aspasia! Aspasia! they have indeed, if they are angry or vext about it.

CCVII. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

Did I tell you, O Aspasia, we were free and remote from the calamities of war? we were. The flute and the timbrel and the harp alone were heard along our streets; and the pavement was bestrewn with cistus and lavender and myrtle, which grow profusely on the rocks behind us. Melanthos had arrived from the Chersonese to marry Eurycleia; and his friend Sosigenes of Corinth had determined to be united on the same day with her sister Phanera.

Those who have seen them say that they were the prettiest girls in the city: they were also the happiest; but less happy than their

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lovers, who however owed at present but a part of the happiness to either. They were sworn friends from early youth, and had not met since, but always had corresponded.

Why can not men draw a line against war as against plague, and shut up the infected? Instead of which, they are proud of being like the dogs in the worst feature; rushing forth into every affray, and taking part in it instantly with equal animosity. I wish we had arrived at such a degree of docility, and had advanced so many steps in improvement, that by degrees we might hope to acquire anything better of these good creatures. We have the worst of every beast, and the best of none.

This is not, O Aspasia! my usual tone of thinking and discoursing: nor is what has happened here among the usual occurrences of my life. The generous heart needs little to be reminded what are the embraces of young and ardent friends; and the withered one could ill represent them.

Eurycleia, in the silence of fondness, in the fulness of content, was holding the hand of her Melanthos. Love has few moments more sweet, Philosophy none more calm. That moment was interrupted by the entrance of Sosigenes; and composure was exchanged for rapture by the friendly soul of Melanthos. Yes, yes, Aspasia! friendship, even in the young, may be more animated than love itself. It was not long, however.

"Where is Phanera?"

"I will call her," said Eurycleia, and went out.

Phanera, fond of ornament, it may be, and ambitious to surpass her sister and enchant her lover, came not speedily, nor indeed did Eurycleia very soon, for it was not at first that she could find her. Conversation had begun in the meanwhile about the war. Melanthos was a little more vehement than the mildness of his nature, it is said, ever allowed him before, and blamed the Corinthians for inciting so many states to hostility. Often had Sosigenes been looking toward the door, expecting his Phanera, and now began to grow impatient. The words of Melanthos, who felt the cruelty of war chiefly because it would separate the two sisters and the two friends, touched the pride of Sosigenes. Unable to moderate his temper, now excited by the absence of Phanera after the sister had some time returned, he said fiercely,

"It is well to blame the citizens of the noblest city upon earth, for

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not enduring an indignity. It is well; but in slaves alone, or viler dependents."

"Sosigenes! Sosigenes!" cried Melanthos, starting up and rushing toward him. At that instant the impetuous Sosigenes, believing violence was about to follow affront, struck him with his dagger to the heart.

"I could not then calm thy anger with an embrace! my too unhappy friend!" while the blood gurgled through the words, sobbed forth Melanthos.

CCVIII. ALCIBIADES TO PERICLES.

You commanded me, O Pericles, that I should write to you, whenever I found an opportunity on land. Phormio cast anchor before Naupactos: we command the Gulf of Crissa and check the movements of the Corinthians. The business of blockading is little to my mind. Writing is almost as insufferable: it is the only thing I do not willingly undertake when my friends desire it. Beside, I have nothing in the world to write about. We have done little but sink a few vessels and burn a few villages. It is really a hard matter to find a table to write upon, so quick and so complete is the devastation. I fancied war had something in it more animating and splendid. The people of the Peloponese are brave, however. They sometimes ask for their children (if very young) but never for their lives. Why can not we think them as little worth taking as they of giving?

I am heartily tired of this warfare; and Phormio has told me, in plain words, he is heartily tired of *me*. Upon this, I requested his permission to join without delay our army before Potidæa. I expected not only an uncivil refusal, but a sharp rebuke.

"The Gods have begun to favour us!" cried Phormio. "This offer is better than the luckiest omen. Alcibiades! thou art the whitest of white birds; and thy flight, whichever wind it float upon, is worth a victory."

I would have been angry; but laughter sprang uppermost; so, throwing my arms round old Phormio's neck, I almost pulled him down with it.

"How now, stripling!" cried he, as willing to be angry as I was, "all this buffoonery before the commander of the fleet!"

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CCIX. ALCIBIADES TO PERICLES.

Hardly could it have been expected that "the whitest of white birds" should have been so speedily on the wing. The day had not closed when Phormio told me, that, knowing my fickleness, he had given orders for my voyage back. Every voyage is prosperous that brings me within sight of an enemy worth seeing. Brave fellows these Potidæans! They never lose their appetite, even in the greatest want of air and exercise. You, who hear everything, must know that they eat one another rather than surrender. I have been but three days in the camp, where, to my delight, I found the brave and kindly Socrates. Do you disapprove of my renewing my intimacy with Philosophy in the midst of battles? Let Philosophy then stand aside; and behold in her place the defender of his country and the saviour of his friend.

The morning after my arrival, the Potidæans burst forth with incredible bravery from their gates, overthrowing all opposition. Now was my time. The heavy-armed in general, being old soldiers, were somewhat slower; and many of the enemy were assailing me when they came up: nor indeed was it then in sufficient force. I was wounded and overthrown, and, at the beginning, stunned: but presently I fancied I heard the sound of a brisk sword on armour over me, and felt something heavy fall on my legs. I was drawn forcibly from under the last of my antagonists. Socrates raised me up, and defended me from the weapons of not a few, unwilling to retire and irresolute to renew the engagement.

I write now, because I am so wounded I can do nothing else.

CCX. PERICLES TO ALCIBIADES.

You are courageous, my Alcibiades, to a degree which I hardly ever observed in another. This alone induces me to doubt whether you will become, so soon as we both of us wished it, an accomplished and perfect soldier. To rush against the enemy before your comrades, is not indeed quite so unseemly as to lag behind; yet it may be even more detrimental in an officer. With old troops, who know their duty, it is always so: with younger alone, who want encouragement, it may not be. Socrates deserved the first honours in the action: his modesty and his affection transferred them to the imprudent and the vanquished, whom he rescued from the shame of rash-

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ness and the wretchedness of captivity. With all my fondness for you, I could not have given you my vote; and, had I commanded against Potidæa, I must have reproved you in presence of the army.

Never, O Alcibiades, inflict on me the misery of passing so severe a sentence. I praised you before others did; I condemn you after them. Your high spirit deserved its reward; your temerity its rebuke. I, who have been the careful guardian of your fortune, am the more anxious one of your safety and of your fame. In my former letter I gave unobstructed way to the more pleasurable emotions: and, in every one that I shall have occasion to write to you hereafter, I am confident of the same enjoyment. Reply to me as your friend, your comrade, the partaker of your pains and pleasures, and at most the director of your studies. But here, my Alcibiades, we must be grave and serious: I must, for once, not guide, but dictate: no answer is here admissible, excepting the answer of a soldier to his general.

CCXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

You know that to Niconöe was awarded by her judge Priapos the prize of beauty in the Kallisteia. In return for this favourable decision, she dedicated to him a golden ewer and a fawn-skin. Under his image a poet, who perhaps was her admirer, and who was grateful to the arbiter, wrote this epigram.

Niconöe is inclined to deck
Thy ruddy shoulder and thick neck
With her own fawn-skin, Lampsacene!
Beside, she brings a golden ewer
To cool thy hands in, very sure
Among what herbage they have been.

Ah! thou hast wicked leering eyes,
And any maiden were unwise
Who should invest thee face to face;
Therefore she does it from behind,
And blesses thee, so just and kind
In giving her the prize for grace.

Here are some others, I believe by Erinna herself, but I find inscribed on them *Address to Erinna.*

Ay, shun the dance and shun the grape,
Erinna! thou shalt not escape.

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Idle the musing maid who thinks
To lie unseen by sharp-eyed lynx
Where Bacchus, god of joy and truth,
Hunts with him, hunts for bashful youth.
So take the thyrsus if you please,
And come and join the Mœnades.

CCXII. ANAXAGORAS TO ASPASIA.

We are now so near winter that there may not be, after the vessel which is about to sail, any more of them bound for Athens, all the remainder of the year. And who knows what another may bring or take away?

I remain in health, but feeble. Life slips from me softly and imperceptibly. I am unwilling to tire myself by blowing a fire which must soon go out, whether I blow it or not. Had I any species of curiosity to send you, were it pebble, sea-weed, or new book, I would send it; not (for it is idle to talk so) as a memorial of me. If the friend is likely to be forgotten, can we believe that anything he has about him will repose a longer time on the memory?

Thus far had I written, when my strength failed me. Stesicles and Apollodoros have told me I must prepare for a voyage. The passage is neither so broad nor so stormy as the Hellespont.

I was resolved not to go until I had looked in my garden for some anemones, which I recollected to have seen blossoming the other day. It occurred to me that usually they appear in spring: so does poetry. I will present to you a little of both; for the first time. They are of equal value; and are worth about as much as the pebble, or the sea-weed, or the new book.

Where are the blooms of many dyes
That used in every path to rise?
Whither are gone the lighter hours?
What leave they? I can only send
My wisest, loveliest, latest friend
These weather-worn and formless flowers.

Think me happy that I am away from Athens; I, who always lose my composure in the presence of crime or calamity. If any one should note to you my singularities, remembering me a year hence, as I trust you and Pericles will do, add to them, but not aloud, a singularity

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of felicity, "*He neither lived nor died with the multitude.*" There are however some Clazomenians who know that Anaxagoras was of Clazomenai.

CCXIII. ALCIBIADES TO PERICLES.

Pericles! I did wrong and rashly. The praises of the Athenians are to me as the hum of insects: they linger in my ear, but are senseless and unexciting. I swear to you I will do better; but I must see you before I go.

Aspasia, whose letter you have sent me since, is even more severe than you have been; and she has neither right nor reason. She is the only woman upon earth that ever railed at rashness, the only one that could distinguish it from fortitude. But every man must be rash once; it saves him from as much inconvenience and mischief as being oftener rash would incur.

Do not consider this nonsense as vindication or reply; and let it not stand in the way of your pardon.

CCXIV. ASPASIA TO ALCIBIADES.

Are you not ashamed, young man, to leave the aged behind you, with all their wounds, merely to show how dexterous you are become in the management of your sword? Unworthy Alcibiades! Never expect that the Athenians, whatever be their levity and inconsiderateness, will award to you the honour of superiority in valour. Socrates well deserved it; not for saving a life which on the next occasion will be thrown away, but for giving to every one capable of profiting by it, an example of steadiness and constancy. Pericles, I hope, will not allow you to disembark, until you have acquired the rudiments of discipline, in the only art in which you ever seemed likely to excell. Have you forgotten too that the pestilence is raging in the city? O rash Alcibiades! the sight of Pericles himself, to you at least, could hardly have been worth so desperate a hazard. But Pericles will reprove you, confident boy! Let me hear no more of you until I have heard that he has granted you his forgiveness.

CCXV. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Censure not too severely, O my Pericles, your inconsiderate cousin! In these days, when so many of your adherents are fallen, some by

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the fever, some by war, we must be parsimonious in the treasury of friendship, at all times far from inexhaustible.

A hundred men of more wisdom and more virtue than Alcibiades would prevail much less with the multitude, should anything sinister befall you. May the Gods avert it! but I always fear something; and, what certainly is more foolish, I fancy my presence could avert from you any calamity. I wish I were persuaded that the Immortals hear us: I would then so perpetually pray for you as hardly to give myself time to read your letters; and you should quarrel with the shortness of mine. But reason, which strengthens our religion, weakens our devotion. Happy are those who have retained throughout life their infantine simplicity, which nurses a tractable idol in an unsuspicious bosom, is assured it knows and heeds the voice addressing it, and shuts it up again with a throb of joy, and keeps it warm. For this, the mind must be nurtured to the last with the same milky food as in childhood; the Gods must have their tangible images, and must laugh to us out of ivy and flowers.

Thinking of you, I had forgotten that I began to write in favour of Alcibiades. Lest, by taxing him with impetuosity and imprudence, you should alienate his fickle mind, I myself have written to him with quite enough severity: at least I think so: you shall judge for yourself. When you have perused it, let it go to him instantly; for here we are uncertain at what point the troops will land from Potidæa. I shall be grieved if anything happens to him. He has more life in him than is enough to animate a city; yet the point of an arrow may extinguish it in an instant. With however long experience before us, we yet might wonder that what is so animated should ever cease at all. You men often talk of glorious death, of death met bravely for your country: I too have been warmed by the bright idea in oratory and poetry: but ah! my dear Pericles! I would rather read it on an ancient tomb than on a recent one.

CCXVI. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

I had already warned Alcibiades of his imprudence and irregularity; but your letter will ensure his correction. The reply he sent me is worthy of a man formed for command. We must watch over him: he will do great good or great evil. Those who are most capable of both, always end miserably; for, although they may have done many things well, yet the first or second that they do badly is their ruin.

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They know not whom to choose as their follower up the scaling-ladder, nor when to loosen their grasp of the pinnacle. Intractable as you may think Alcibiades, there is not a youth in Athens so easily led away by a weaker judgment than his own. He wishes to excell in everything, and succeeds: but this wish brings him into contact with too many; and he can not at present push them off far enough from him to see plainly and distinctly what they are. He will soon stand above them and know them better.

I must leave off: the dying call me forth. Blessings on my Aspasia and her little Athenian!

CCXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

The verses I shall presently write out for you, at the bottom of my letter, are composed, as you will perceive, in the broadest Dorian, on the extraordinary death of Æschylus. Probably the unhappy poet was murdered by some enemy or some robber. He was found with his skull fractured, and, may-be, with a tortoise near him. But who in the world can believe that an eagle dropped it from above? that the quickest in sight of all animals mistook a bald head for a rock? And did ever man walk in the fields of Sicily with his head uncovered? If he did, his death might easily be accounted for, without a tortoise or eagle: a sunbeam is stronger and surer. Whenever I find a book containing this gross absurdity, I instantly throw it aside, as the effusion of an idle and silly writer, and am well assured it must be incapable of instructing or interesting me.

The petulant author of the verses you will find below, is evidently a disappointed poet. Hiero and Theron could never treat Æschylus with neglect or with indifference. Little as may be our regard and our respect for royalty, we hardly can suppose any king, who knows Greek, so barbarous and stupid as to fancy in himself a nobility more exalted than in Æschylus, or gifted by the Gods with a higher office, than stewardship to the greatest of men among whom he himself is the richest.

Bard of Eleusis! art thou dead
So strangely! can it be
An eagle dropt upon thy head
A tortoise? no, not he.

They who devised the fable, marr'd
The moral of their song:
They meant the eagle by the bard
But placed the creature wrong.

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Quickest in courts those ever move
Whom nature made most slow:
Tortoise wears plumes and springs above
While eagle moults below.

I have room enough for another short piece, which carries with it somewhat more than the dialect for a testimonial of its atticism. They who are ill-trained in the course of poetry, *puff and blow*, as the trainers express it, at short distances: they who are trained better, move with little difficulty and no appearance of exertion. Strength does not lie in varicose veins. This is, however, a subject which requires grace only. You like to drink water; but you like to drink it from a silver cup.

To Love.

Where is my heart, perfidious boy?
Give it, O give it, back again!
I ask no more for hours of joy;
Lift but thy hand and burst my chain.

Love's Reply.

Fond man! the heart we rashly gave
She values not, yet won't restore:
She passes on from slave to slave;
Go, go; thy heart is thine no more.

CCXVIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

The Athenians, my dear Aspasia, are reported to be a religious people; yet I have often wondered at their freedom and boldness, in depriving the Immortal Gods of their power on some occasions, and on others in accosting them with familiarity and disrespect. It would have been satisfactory to me if you had related what befell the unhappy man who presumed to call *perfidious* and *boy* one of the most powerful. Certainly we are inspired by our holy religion to believe that Love is youthful: but Anacreon is the only poet who represents him as a child. There is an absurdity in making him appear younger than we ourselves are when we begin to be under the influence of the passion. But the graver fault is in calling him (what I tremble to write) perfidious! You will relieve my mind of some anxiety by assuring me that nothing sinister has befallen so captious and irreverential a votary. If his fault is recent, and if he is yet living, it would be wise and considerate in him to implore the blessed mother

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of this almighty deity, that she may be pleased to avert his anger, should he not have forgotten the offence. I say it, because the most experienced and the most pious are of opinion that he is oftener oblivious. Was not he both wiser and more pious who wrote a poem in a very different spirit, and, whether more or less attic, fuller of thought, consistency, and reflection. If you have forgotten it, let me bring it back again, and fix it as firmly as may be in your memory:

> Ah! what a blessed privilege it is
> To stand upon this insulated rock
> On the north side of youth! I see below
> Many at labour, many at a game
> Than labour more laborious, wanting breath
> And crying *help!* What now! what vexes them?
> Only a laughing maid and winged boy,
> Obstinate boy indeed, who will not shoot
> His other arrow, having shot the first.
> Where is the harm in this? yet they meanwhile
> Make all the air about them pant with sobs,
> And with one name weary poor Echo down.

Aspasia! I too have suffered; and Love knows it: yet I dare not even tell him that he knows it. To remind him would be indelicate; to complain would be irreligious. And what could all his power do for me now? But this, believe me, is not the reason why I endure in silence, and bend in submission to the arbitrement of the Gods. Surely, too surely, whoever has breathed has sighed. When we have lost, O Aspasia, those we love, whether by impassable distance or any other dispensation of the Gods, youth is less happy than age, and age than death.

CCXIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Youth, like the aloe, blossoms but once, and its flower springs from the midst of thorns: but see with what strength and to what height the aloe-flower rises over them: be not surpassed by it.

> On love, on grief, on every human thing,
> Time sprinkles Lethe's water with his wing.

If I continue to reason, or to moralize, or to versify, you will begin to doubt my sincerity, or at least the warmth of my affection. I am induced to believe, O Cleone, that the Deity you venerate so profoundly and solemnly, is far from unforgiving. In the verses I now

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send you, there appears to be a proof of it; for the writer seems to have treated him not only as a child, but a child much addicted to mischief; yet never was man treated in return with more benignity. I should tremble at the manner in which the Fates are mentioned, if matters were left at their arbitration. But we know the contrary: we know positively that they can spin only what is on their distaffs, and not a thread can be turned to a new pattern.

I would be grave, Cleone! I would indeed: but really there is no harm in laughing at children and old women, Gods or not. We know they have a good deal to do in the affairs of this world, however: and it is unwise to laugh at those who are as capable of extinguishing our laughter as of exciting it.

"What art thou doing with those shears?"
I shouted in an urchin's ears,
Who notched them and who made them grate,
While three old women near him sate,
And scowl'd at every scratch they heard,
But never said a single word.
In a dark corner thus all three
Sate with an elbow on the knee,
And three blue fingers held their tips
Imprest on three still bluer lips.
Although the froward boy I chid
Did not (boys will not) what was bid,
His countenance was not malign
As that was of the elder trine.
"Look at those frightful ones!" he said,
And each one shook her thin-hair'd head.
"Nay, never fear the angry crones" . .
Said he; and each replied with groans.
"They are all vicious; for they knew
That what I did I did for you,
Contemplating the fairest maid
That ever with my bow has play'd.
Crones! by my help your shears have got
A set of teeth, which you have not.
Come! come! Death's bridemaids! snip as fast
As snip ye may, her yéars shall last
In spite of you, her beauty bloom
On this side and beyond the tomb:
I swear by Styx."
"And I by thee,"
Cried I, "that what thou sayst shall be."

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CCXX. ALCIBIADES TO PERICLES.

Pray why did you tell Phanomachos to station some confidential one near me, who should be an eternal check on me? There is little chance that I should do anything extravagant, unless the Potidæans invite me to dinner and I accept the invitation. I will not allow any man to defend me before I stand in need of defence, and before I have deserved to save my life by proving it worth something. I should quarrel with Socrates himself, much more with another, presuming to take what belongs to me, of danger or of glory. It is not kind in you, nor open, nor prudent. Would you wish any one to say "Pericles takes care of his own relatives!" This ought only to be said of the vilest men in the worst governments; and of you until now it never could be. You have given no such orders in regard to Xanthippos. He may be as rash and violent as he pleases. Even here he dares to call me *Neaniskos* and *Kouridion* and *Ta paidika*.* By Castor! if he were not the son of Pericles, his being my cousin should not save from a stroke of the sabre that fierce disdainful visage. I promise you it shall soon be seen which of us is the braver and the better man. I would not say this to you unless that you might let him know my sentiments. I have no words, written or spoken, for the contumelious: my complaints are for the ear of those only who are kind to me.

CCXXI. PERICLES TO ALCIBIADES.

Do not think, my Alcibiades, that I recommended you to the guardianship of Phanomachos, in order that he should exercise over you a troublesome vigilance of controul, or indulge toward you an unmilitary partiality. But I am more intimate with him than I am with Xenophon or Aristoclides or Hestiodoros;† and having sons, he knows that restraints are often necessary on the impatience of military ardour.

Your letter is a proof that I judged rightly. My praises of your valour are lost amid those of the army and of the city; but the delight it has given me is, I am confident, one among the thoughts that have assuaged your wounds. On your return, the citizens will express their sense of your conduct.

Endeavour to prove, now that you are acknowledged to be the first

* This expression was usually reproachful; not always; as we see in Plato.

† These three were appointed to commands with Phanomachos.

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in bravery, that you are more discreet than Xanthippos. Many in every army are so nearly on an equality in courage, that any attempt of theirs to show a superiority is ineffectual. Unbecoming language can neither prove nor disprove it, but must detract from its worth and merit. Discretion, on the contrary, is the sure sign of that presence of mind without which valour strikes untimely and impotently. Judgment alone makes courage available, and conciliates power with genius. Consider that you never will have attained the scope of your ambition, until you lead and govern those men against whom your passions now exasperate you: and, unless you do conciliate them, you never can induce them to acknowledge your superiority, much less submit to your governance. It is best the germs of power should spring forth early, that they may have time enough for gaining strength: therefore I write to you, no longer as a youth in pupilage, but as a candidate for the highest offices of the commonwealth.

Try whether your forbearance may not produce a better effect on Xanthippos than my remonstrances. I write to you rather than to him, because I rely more firmly on your affection. Be worthy of such a secret, O Alcibiades! and think how highly I must esteem your prudence and manliness, when I delegate to you, who are the younger, the power of correcting in him the faults which I have been unable to eradicate or suppress. Go, and, in the spirit with which I send it, give my love to Xanthippos. He may neglect it, he may despise it, he may cast it away, but I will gather it all up again for him: you must help me.

CCXXII. ALCIBIADES TO PERICLES.

Pericles, I was much edified by your letter; but, pardon me, when I came to the close of it I thought you rather mad.

"What!" said I, "beard this panther!"

However, when I had considered a little more and a little better on it, I went to him and delivered your love. He stared at me, and then desired to see the direction. "Ay," said he, "I remember the handwriting. He oftener writes to me than I to him. I suppose he has less to do and less to think of."

The few other words he added are hardly worth the trouble of repetition: in fact, they were not very filial. Dear Pericles! I would love him, were it only out of perversity. But, beside all other rights

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over me, you have made me more disposed than ever to obey you, in making me more contented with myself, as you have by this commission. I may do something yet, if we can but fumigate or pray away the plague. Of two thousand four hundred soldiers, who landed but forty days before me from the Bosphorus, under the command of Agnon son of Nikias, one thousand and fifty are already dead. I shall have nobody to persuade or manage, or even to fight with, if we go on so.

CCXXIII. ALCIBIADES TO PERICLES.

Potidæa has surrendered. The dead of the city are scarcely more shadows than the living, and yet how bravely they fought to the last! I should have been sorry for them a few months ago; but I have now learnt what it is to be a soldier. We must rise superior to pain, and then take another flight, farther afield, and rise superior to pity. Besides, the Potidæans were traitors; and next, they were against us; and, furthermore, they were so wicked as to eat one another rather than submit. This shows their malice. Now we have done nothing half so bad toward them; and I assure you, if others are disposed to such cruelty, I will take no part in it: for who would ever kiss me afterward?

CCXXIV. PERICLES TO ALCIBIADES.

The remembrance of past days that were happy, increases the gloominess of those that are not, and intercepts the benefits of those that would be.

In the midst of the plague this reflection strikes me, on the intelligence I have received from Lampsacos. You likewise will be sorry, O Alcibiades, to hear that Anaxagoras is dying. Although he seldom conversed with you, and seldom commended you in private, believe me, he never omitted an occasion of pointing out to your friends any sign you had manifested of ability or virtue. He declined the character of teacher, yet few have taught so much, wherever his wisdom was accessible. Philosophers there have been indeed, at Athens and elsewhere, earnest in the discovery and in the dissemination of truth; but, excepting Thales and Pherecydes, none among them has been free from ostentation, or from desire of obtaining the absolute and exclusive possession of weak and ductile minds. Now the desire of great influence over others is praiseworthy only where great good to

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the community may arise from it. To domineer in the arbitrary sway of a dogmatical and grasping, yet loose and empty-handed philosophy, which never bears upon inventions and uses, nor elevates nor tranquillises the mind, and to look upon ourselves with a sweet complacency from so petty an eminence, is worse than boyish ambition. To call idlers and stragglers to us, and to sit among them and regale on their wonder, is the selfishness of an indigent and ill-appointed mind. Anaxagoras was subject to none of these weaknesses, nor to the greater of condescending to reprove, or to argue with, those who are. He made every due allowance for our infirmities of understanding; and variations of temper, the effect of them; and he was no less friendly toward those who differed widely in opinion from him, than toward those who quite agreed. When a friend of his was admiring and praising him for it, he interrupted him, saying,

"Why not? Is it not too self-evident for language, that, if I had taken the same road, I should have gone in the same direction? and would not the same direction have led to the same conclusion?"

Yes, Alcibiades! it is indeed self-evident, and, were it spoken unwarily, it would be reprehended for being so: and yet scarcely one man in ten millions acts consistently upon it.

There are humanities, my friend, which require our perpetual recollection, and are needful to compensate, in some measure, for those many others we must resign to the necessities and exactions of war.

CCXXV. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Serene and beautiful are our autumnal days in Thessaly. We have many woods about us, and many woodland sounds among them. In this season of the year I am more inclined to poetry than in any other; and I want it now more than ever to flow among my thoughts, and to bear up the heavier.

I hesitate, O Cleone, to send you what I have been writing. You will say it is a strange fancy of mine, and fitter for me in those earlier hours of life when we were reposing in the Island.

Nothing, I must confess, would be more ill-placed than a *Drama* or *Dialogue* in the world below; at least if the Shades entered into captious disquisitions or frivolous pleasantries. But we believe that our affections outlive us, and that Love is not a stranger in Elysium.

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Humours, the idioms of life, are lost in the transition, or are generalised in the concourse and convergency of innumerable races: passions, the universal speech, are throughout intelligible.

The Genius of Homer is never to be gainsaid by us: and he shows us how heroes, and women worthy of heroes, felt and reasoned. A long dialogue, a formal drama, would be insupportable: but perhaps a single scene may win attention and favour from my own Cleone.

I imagine then Agamemnon to descend from his horrible death, and to meet instantly his daughter. By the nature of things, by the suddenness of the event, Iphigeneia can have heard nothing of her mother's double crime, adultery and murder.

I suspend my pen. Although I promised you in the morning my short Acherusian scene, I am almost ready to retract my words. Everybody has found out that I am deficient in tenderness. While I was writing I could not but shed tears . . just as priests do libations, you will say, to save other people the trouble.

THE SHADES OF AGAMEMNON AND OF IPHIGENEIA.

Iphigeneia. Father! I now may lean upon your breast,
And you with unreverted eyes will grasp
Iphigeneia's hand.
We are not shades
Surely! for yours throbs yet.
And did my blood
Win Troy for Greece?
Ah! 'twas ill done to shrink,
But the sword gleam'd so sharp, and the good priest
Trembled, and Pallas frown'd above, severe.
Agamemnon. Daughter!
Iphigeneia. Beloved father! is the blade
Again to pierce my bosom? 'tis unfit
For sacrifice; no blood is in its veins;
No God requires it here; here are no wrongs
To vindicate, no realms to overthrow.
You are standing as at Aulis in the fane,
With face averted, holding (as before)
My hand; but yours burns not, as then it burn'd;
This alone shows me we are with the Blest,
Nor subject to the sufferings we have borne.
I will win back past kindness.
Tell me then,
Tell how my mother fares who loved me so,

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And griev'd, as 'twere for you, to see me part.
Frown not, but pardon me for tarrying
Amid too idle words, nor asking how
She prais'd us both (which most?) for what we did.

Agamemnon. Ye Gods who govern here! do human pangs
Reach the pure soul thus far below? do tears
Spring in these meadows?

Iphigeneia. No, sweet father, no . .
I could have answered that; why ask the Gods?

Agamemnon. Iphigeneia! O my child! the Earth
Has gendered crimes unheard-of heretofore,
And Nature may have changed in her last depths,
Together with the Gods and all their laws.

Iphigeneia. Father! we must not let you here condemn;
Not, were the day less joyful: recollect
We have no wicked here; no king to judge.
Poseidon, we have heard, with bitter rage
Lashes his foaming steeds against the skies,
And, laughing with loud yell at winged fire
Innoxious to his fields and palaces,
Affrights the eagle from the sceptred hand;
While Pluto, gentlest brother of the three
And happiest in obedience, views sedate
His tranquil realm, nor envies theirs above.
No change have we, not even day for night
Nor spring for summer.
All things are serene,
Serene too be your spirit! None on earth
Ever was half so kindly in his house,
And so compliant, even to a child.
Never was snatch'd your robe away from me,
Though going to the council. The blind man
Knew his good king was leading him indoors
Before he heard the voice that marshall'd Greece,
Therefore all prais'd you.
Proudest men themselves
In others praise humility, and most
Admire it in the sceptre and the sword.
What then can make you speak thus rapidly
And briefly? in your step thus hesitate?
Are you afraid to meet among the good
Incestuous Helen here?

Agamemnon. O! Gods of Hell!

Iphigeneia. She hath not past the river.
We may walk
With our hands link'd nor feel our house's shame.

Agamemnon. Never mayst thou, Iphigeneia, feel it!

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Aulis had no sharp sword, thou wouldst exclaim,
Greece no avenger . . I, her chief so late,
Through Erebos, through Elysium, writhe beneath it.
Iphigeneia. Come, I have better diadems than those
Of Argos and Mycenai: come away,
And I will weave them for you on the bank.
You will not look so pale when you have walk'd
A little in the grove, and have told all
Those sweet fond words the widow sent her child.
Agamemnon. O Earth! I suffered less upon thy shores!
(*Aside.*) The bath that bubbled with my blood, the blows
That spilt it (O worse torture!) must she know?
Ah! the first woman coming from Mycenai
Will pine to pour this poison in her ear,
Taunting sad Charon for his slow advance.
Iphigeneia!
Iphigeneia. Why thus turn away?
Calling me with such fondness! I am here,
Father! and where you are, will ever be.
Agamemnon. Thou art my child; yes, yes, thou art my child.
All was not once what all now is! Come on,
Idol of love and truth! my child! my child!
(*Alone.*) Fell woman! ever false! false was thy last
Denunciation, as thy bridal vow;
And yet even that found faith with me! The dirk
Which sever'd flesh from flesh, where this hand rests,
Severs not, as thou boastedst in thy scoffs,
Iphigeneia's love from Agamemnon:
The wife's a spark may light, a straw consume,
The daughter's not her heart's whole fount hath quench'd,
'Tis worthy of the Gods, and lives for ever.
Iphigeneia. What spake my father to the Gods above?
Unworthy am I then to join in prayer?
If, on the last, or any day before,
Of my brief course on earth, I did amiss,
Say it at once, and let me be unblest;
But, O my faultless father! why should you?
And shun so my embraces?
Am I wild
And wandering in my fondness?
We are shades!
Groan not thus deeply; blight not thus the season
Of full-orb'd gladness! Shades we are indeed,
But mingled, let us feel it, with the blest.
I knew it, but forgot it suddenly,
Altho' I felt it all at your approach.
Look on me; smile with me at my illusion . .

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You are so like what you have ever been
(Except in sorrow!) I might well forget
I could not win you as I used to do.
It was the first embrace since my descent
I ever aim'd at: those who love me live,
Save one, who loves me most, and now would chide me.

Agamemnon. We want not, O Iphigeneia, we
Want not embrace, nor kiss that cools the heart
With purity, nor words that more and more
Teach what we know from those we know, and sink
Often most deeply where they fall most light.
Time was when for the faintest breath of thine
Kingdom and life were little.

Iphigeneia. Value them
As little now.

Agamemnon. Were life and kingdom all!

Iphigeneia. Ah! by our death many are sad who loved us.
The little fond Electra, and Orestes
So childish and so bold! O that mad boy!
They will be happy too.
Cheer! king of men!
Cheer! there are voices, songs . . Cheer! arms advance.

Agamemnon. Come to me, soul of peace! These, these alone,
These are not false embraces.

Iphigeneia. Both are happy!

Agamemnon. Freshness breathes round me from some breeze above.
What are ye, winged ones! with golden urns?

The Hours (*descending*).

The Hours. To each an urn we bring.
Earth's purest gold
Alone can hold
The lymph of the Lethèan spring.
We, son of Atreus! we divide
The dulcet from the bitter tide
That runs athwart the paths of men.
No more our pinions shalt thou see.
Take comfort! We have done with thee,
And must away to earth again.

(*Ascending.*)

Where thou art, thou
Of braided brow,
Thou cull'd too soon from Argive bow'rs,
Where thy sweet voice is heard among
The shades that thrill with choral song,
None can regret the parted Hours.

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Chorus of Argives.

Maiden! be thou the spirit that breathes
Triumph and joy into our song!
Wear and bestow these amaranth-wreaths,
Iphigeneia! they belong
To none but thee and her who reigns
(Less chaunted) on our bosky plains.

(*Semichorus.*)

Iphigeneia! 'tis to thee
Glory we owe and victory.
Clash, men of Argos, clash your arms
To martial worth and virgin charms.

Other Semichorus.

Ye men of Argos! it was sweet
To roll the fruits of conquest at the feet
Whose whispering sound made bravest hearts beat fast.
This we have known at home,
But hither we are come
To crown the king who ruled us first and last.

Chorus.

Father of Argos! king of men!
We chaunt the hymn of praise to thee.
In serried ranks we stand again,
Our glory safe, our country free.
Clash, clash the arms we bravely bore
Against Scamander's God-defended shore.

Semichorus.

Blessed art thou who hast repell'd
Battle's wild fury, Ocean's whelming foam;
Blessed o'er all, to have beheld
Wife, children, house avenged, and peaceful home!

Other Semichorus.

We too, thou seest, are now
Among the happy, though the aged brow
From sorrow for us we could not protect,
Nor, on the polisht granite of the well
Folding our arms, of spoils and perils tell,
Nor lift the vase on the lov'd head erect.

Semichorus.

What whirling wheels are those behind?
What plumes come flaring through the wind,
Nearer and nearer? From his car
He who defied the heaven-born Powers of war

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Pelides springs! Dust, dust are we
To him, O king, who bends the knee,
Proud only to be first in reverent praise of thee.

Other Semichorus.

Clash, clash the arms! None other race
Shall see such heroes face to face.
We too have fought; and they have seen
Nor sea-sand grey nor meadow green
Where Dardans stood against their men . .
Clash! Io Pæan! clash again!
Repinings for lost days repress . .
The flames of Troy had cheer'd us less.

Chorus.

Hark! from afar more war-steeds neigh,
Thousands o'er thousands rush this way.
Ajax is yonder! ay, behold
The radiant arms of Lycian gold!
Arms from admiring valour won,
Tydeus! and worthy of thy son.
'Tis Ajax wears them now; for he
Rules over Adria's stormy sea.

He threw them to the friend who lost
(By the dim judgment of the host)
Those wet with tears which Thetis gave
The youth most beauteous of the brave.
In vain! the insatiate soul would go
For comfort to his peers below.
Clash! ere we leave them all the plain,
Clash! Io Pæan! once again!

Hide these things away, Cleone! I dare never show them to any but Pericles. I can reach no further than a chorus; hardly that. Tragedy is quite above me: I want the strength, the pathos, the right language. Fie! when there are so many who would teach me. Concede, that the shades were not happy at once in Elysium; and that the Hours are not more shadowy than they. Æschylus brings into *our* world Beings as allegorical: and where shall we fix a boundary between the allegorical and divine?

CCXXVI. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

You build your nest, Aspasia, like the swallow,
Bringing a little on the bill at once,
And fixing it attentively and fondly,

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And trying it, and then from your soft breast
Warming it with the inmost of the plumage.
Nests there are many, of this very year
Many the nests are, which the winds shall shake,
The rains run through, and other birds beat down;
Yours, O Aspasia! rests against the temple
Of heavenly love, and thence inviolate,
It shall not fall this winter, nor the next.

CCXXVII. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

You have encouraged me to proceed in the most difficult tract of poetry. Had I openly protested that the concluding act of *Agamemnon*, the *Electra* of our tragedian, dissatisfies me, he alone of the Athenians would have pardoned my presumption. But Electra was of a character to be softened rather than exasperated by grief. An affectionate daughter is affectionate even to an unworthy mother; and female resentment (as all resentment should do) throws itself down inert at the entrance of the tomb. Hate with me, if you can hate anything, my Cleone! the vengeance that rises above piety, above sorrow; the vengeance that gloats upon its prostrate victim. Compunction and pity should outlive it; and the child's tears should blind her to the parent's guilt. I have restored to my Electra such a heart as Nature had given her; torn by suffering, but large and alive with tenderness. In her veneration for the father's memory, with his recent blood before her eyes, she was vehement in urging the punishment of the murderess. The Gods had commanded it at the hands of their only son. When it was accomplished, he himself was abhorrent of the deed, but defended it as a duty; she in her agony cast the whole on her own head. If character is redeemed and restored; if Nature, who always is consistent, is shown so; if pity and terror are concentrated at the close; I have merited a small portion of what my too generous Cleone bestowed on me in advance.

THE DEATH OF CLYTEMNESTRA.

Orestes and Electra.

Electra. Pass on, my brother! she awaits the wretch,
Dishonorer, despoiler, murderer . . .
None other name shall name him . . . she awaits
As would a lover . . .
Heavenly Gods! what poison
O'erflows my lips!
Adultress! husband-slayer!

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Strike her, the tigress!
Think upon our father . .
Give the sword scope . . think what a man was he,
How fond of her! how kind to all about,
That he might gladden and teach *us* . . how proud
Of thee, Orestes! tossing thee above
His joyous head and calling thee his crown.
Ah! boys remember not what melts our hearts
And marks them evermore!
Bite not thy lip,
Nor tramp as an unsteady colt the ground,
Nor stare against the wall, but think again
How better than all fathers was our father.
Go . .

Orestes. Loose me then! for this white hand, Electra,
Hath fastened upon mine with fiercer grasp
Than mine can grasp the sword.

Electra. Go, sweet Orestes!
I knew not I was holding thee . . Avenge him!
(*Alone.*) How he sprang from me!
. . Sure, he now has reacht
The room before the bath . .
The bath-door creaks!
. . It hath creakt thus since he . . since thou, O father!
Ever since thou didst loosen its strong valves,
Either with all thy dying weight, or strength
Agonised with her stabs . .
What plunge was that?
Ah me!
. . What groans are those?

Orestes (*returning*). They sound through hell
Rejoicing the Eumenides.*
She slew
Our father; she made thee the scorn of slaves;
Me (son of him who ruled this land and more)
She made an outcast . . .
Would I had been so
For ever! ere such vengeance . . .

---

* An ancient scholiast has recorded that the name of Eumenides was given to these Goddesses after the expiation of Orestes. But Catullus (called the *learned* by his countrymen) represents Ariadne invoking them by this appellation long before the Trojan war. The verses are the most majestic in the Roman language.

Eumenides! quarum anguineis redimita capillis
Frons expirantes præportat pectoris iras,
Huc, huc adventate! &c.

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Electra. O that Zeus
Had let thy arm fall sooner at thy side
Without those drops! list! they are audible . . .
For they are many . . from the sword's point falling,
And down from the mid blade!
Too rash Orestes!
Couldst thou not then have spared our wretched mother?
Orestes. The Gods could not.
Electra. She was not theirs, Orestes.
Orestes. And didst not thou . .
Electra. 'Twas I, 'twas I, who did it;
Of our unhappiest house the most unhappy!
Under this roof, by every God accurst,
There is no grief, there is no guilt, but mine.
Orestes. Electra! no!
'Tis now my time to suffer . .
Mine be, with all its pangs, the righteous deed.

CCXXVIII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

I will never praise you again until you complete the tragedy. This is the time for it, now all the dramatic poets of your country are dead or silent. Not that I would invite you to have it represented or published: but, believe me, the exertion of poetical power, in these elevations, throws off many of the mind's diseases. Little or nothing of the sort can be effected by slenderer and more desultory attempts. A bushel of garnets and amethysts and topazes is not worth a single ruby the size of the smallest: and yet they are pretty things enough, and attract as many people. One single act of such a tragedy as you are able to compose, outvalues a thousand pieces of less cohesive and infrangible materials. Let others expatiate on trivial objects, ordinary characters, and uninteresting events: let them be called poets by themselves and by their households: but remember, O Aspasia, that you have Athenians for judges, and that the progeny of heroes and gods is about to plead before them.

Again, I declare it, I will never praise you until you comply with me: I will only love you; and hardly that.

CCXXIX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

I will never take so many steps up the highths of poetry, as to make any poet doubt whether he can overtake me. There is not enough honey in my cells to attract the wasps; nor shall there be. If you really think I have done better in some parts than the generality,

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keep the secret; at least from others; and if you desire to see the tragedy completed . . . finish it yourself. You have often done work for me greatly more difficult. I never could work anything with the needle: and it was not because I feared its roughening my fingers, as you were pleased to say after you had finished it. I do not like any labour of the hands; that is the matter of fact; not even so little as the writing out of a tragedy. I will, however, on this one occasion, give you a little assistance.

THE MADNESS OF ORESTES.

Orestes and Electra.

Orestes. Heavy and murderous dreams, O my Electra,
Have dragged me from myself.
Is this Mycenai?
Are we . . . are all who should be . . . in our house?
Living? unhurt? our father here? our mother?
Why that deep gasp? for 'twas not sigh nor groan.
She then . . . 'twas she who fell! when? how? beware!
No, no, speak out at once, that my full heart
May meet it, and may share with thee in all . .
In all . . . but that one thing.
It was a dream.
We may share all.
They live? both live?
O say it!

Electra. The Gods have placed them from us, and there rolls
Between us that dark river . . .

Orestes. Blood! blood! blood!
I see it roll; I see the hand above it,
Imploring; I see *her*.
Hiss me not back,
Ye snake-hair'd maids! I will look on; I will
Hear the words gurgle thro' that cursed stream,
And catch that hand . . that hand . . which slew my father!
It can not be . . . . how could it slay my father?
Death to the slave who spoke it! . . . slay my father!
It toet me up to him to earn a smile,
And was a smile then such a precious boon,
And royal state and proud affection nothing?
Ay, and thee too, Electra, she once taught
To take the sceptre from him at the door . .
Not the bath-door, not the bath-door, mind that! . .
And place it in the vestibule, against
The spear of Pallas, where it used to stand.
Where is it now? methinks I missed it there.
How we have trembled to be seen to move it!

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Both looking up, lest that stern face should frown
Which always gazed on Zeus right opposite.
O! could but one tear more fall from my eyes,
It would shake off those horrid visages,
And melt them into air.
I am not yours,
Fell Goddesses! A just and generous Power,
A bright-hair'd God, directed me.
And thus
Abased is he whom such a God inspired!
(*After a pause.*)
Into whose kingdom went they? did they go
Together?
Electra. Oh! they were not long apart.
Orestes. I know why thou art pale; I know whose head
Thy flower-like hands have garlanded; I know
For whom thou hast unbraided all thy love.
He well deserves it . . . . he shall have it all.
Glory and love shall crown thee, my brave sister!
Electra. I am not she of Sparta. Let me live
(If live I must, Orestes!) not unnamed,
Nor named too often. Speak no more of love,
Ill-omen'd and opprobrious in this house . .
A mother should have had, a father had it,
O may a brother let it dwell with him,
Unchangeable, unquestioned, solitary,
Strengthened and hallowed in the depths of grief!
Gaze not so angrily . . I dare not see thee,
I dare not look where comfort should be found.
Orestes. I dare and do behold them all day long,
And, were that face away so like my mother's,
I would advance and question and compel them . .
They hear me and they know it.
Electra. Hear me too,
Ye mighty ones! to me invisible!
And spare him! spare him! for without the Gods
He wrought not what he wrought: And are not ye
Partakers of their counsels and their power?
O spare the son of him whom ye and they
Sent against Ilion, to perform your will
And bid the rulers of the earth be just.
Orestes. And dare they frighten thee too? frighten thee?
And bend thee into prayer?
Off, hateful eyes!
Look upon me, not her.
Ay, thus; 'tis well.
Cheer, cheer thee, my Electra!

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I am strong,
Stronger than ever . . steel, fire, adamant . .
But can not bear thy brow upon my neck,
Can not bear these wild writhings, these loud sobs.
By all the Gods! I think thou art half mad . . .
I must away . . follow me not . . stand there!

Here is the Prayer of Orestes, in his madness, to Apollo; and there follows, what is not immediately connected with it, the Reply of the Priestess.

Orestes. O king Apollo! god Apollo! god
Powerful to smite and powerful to preserve!
If there is blood upon me, as there seems,
Purify that black stain (thou only canst)
With every rill that bubbles from these caves
Audibly; and come willing to the work.
No; 'tis not they; 'tis blood; 'tis blood again
That bubbles in my ear, that shakes the shades
Of thy dark groves, and lets in hateful gleams,
Bringing me . . what dread sight! what sounds abhorr'd!
What screams! They are my mother's: 'tis her eye
That through the snakes of those three furies glares,
And makes them hold their peace that she may speak.
Has thy voice bidden them all forth? There slink
Some that would hide away, but must turn back,
And others like blue lightnings bound along
From rock to rock; and many hiss at me
As they draw nearer. Earth, fire, water, all
Abominate the deed the Gods commanded!
Alas! I came to pray, not to complain;
And lo! my speech is impious as my deed!

Priestess of Apollo.

Take refuge here amid our Delphian shades,
O troubled breast!
Here the most pious of Mycenai's maids
Shall watch thy rest
And wave the cooling laurel o'er thy brow,
Nor insect swarm
Shall ever break thy slumbers, nor shalt thou
Start at the alarm
Of boys infesting (as they do) the street
With mocking songs,
Stopping and importuning all they meet,
And heaping wrongs

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Upon thy diadem'd and sacred head,
Worse than when base
Œgisthus (shudder not!) his toils outspread
Around thy race.
Altho' even in this fane the fitful blast
Thou may'st hear roar,
Thy name among our highest rocks shall last
For evermore.

Orestes. A calm comes over me: life brings it not
With any of its tides: my end is near.
O Priestess of the purifying God
Receive her! * and when she hath closed mine eyes,
Do thou (weep not, my father's child!) close hers.

CCXXX. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Many are now recovering from the fever, which no longer can be called a pestilence. Pericles, though he tells me he is weak in body and altered in appearance, will soon overcome his fears about me. We shall presently meet again. And so, Cleone, you really have ventured at last to accept the invitation of Euphorbia. If she talked to you of her son she was imprudent and indiscreet: perhaps in her earlier invitations she was hardly less so. But who can foresee the end of sorrow, or would foresee the end of happiness? It usually is nearer at hand. When we enter a place whence the beloved has been long absent, part of the presence seems to be left behind. Again we draw back from the window as we did before, because then we were told people were coming. Foolish! foolish! I am representing my own sensations in times past: girlish sensations, which never were Cleone's, even in girlhood. Ah, Cleone! the beautiful smooth dove's plumage is hard and cold externally; but what throbbing, what warmth, what ardour, what tenderness, deep within! We must neither of us prefix *ah!* to anything in future: we must be the happiest of the happy. Here are two pieces of verse for you. That on Dirce was sent to me by Pericles; to prove that his Athenians can sport with Charon even now. The last quaternion seems the production of an elderly man: and some of the ladies, on whom it was not written, and to whom it is not applicable, cry shame on him, beyond a doubt.

* Pointing to his sister.

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Stand close around, ye Stygian set,
With Dirce in one boat convey'd,
Or Charon, seeing, may forget
That he is old, and she a shade.

Love ran with me, then walkt, then sate,
Then said, *Come! come! it grows too late.*
And then he would have gone, but . . no . .
You caught his eye: he could not go.

CCXXXI. ASPASIA TO CLEONE.

Where on earth is there so much society as in a beloved child? He accompanies me in my walks, gazes into my eyes for what I am gathering from books, tells me more and better things than they do, and asks me often what neither I nor they can answer. When he is absent I am filled with reflections: when he is present I have room for none beside what I receive from him. The charms of his childhood bring me back to the delights of mine, and I fancy I hear my own words in a sweeter voice. Will he (O how I tremble at the mute oracle of futurity!) will he ever be as happy as I have been? Alas! and must he ever be as subject to fears and apprehensions? No; thanks to the Gods! never, never. He carries his father's heart within his breast: I see him already an orator and a leader. I try to teach him daily some of his father's looks and gestures, and I never smile but at his docility and gravity. How his father will love him! the little thunderer! the winner of cities! the vanquisher of Cleones!

CCXXXII. CLEONE TO ASPASIA.

The Lacedæmonians, we hear, have occupied not only all Attica, but are about to enter, if they have not entered already, the territory of their confederates the Thebans, and to join their forces. Whither will you go, my Aspasia? Thessaly is almost as perilous as Bœotia. It is worse than criminal to be so nearly allied to the greatest man on earth, who must always have the greatest enemies. There are more who will forgive injury than there are who will forgive station: and those who assail in vain the power of Pericles, will exert their abilities in diminishing his equanimity and happiness. I fear your fondness will have induced you again to enter the city, that you may assuage and divide those cares which must weigh heavily on his wisdom and patriotism; and the more, since his health has been

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undermined by the pestilence. I dare not advise you to forego a duty: but remember he has commanded you to remain away. Your return would afflict him. I am quite incapable of judging for you. Were I with you, then perhaps I might know many things which should influence your decision.

And can two years have passed over since this evil entered your city, without my flying to comfort you? Two years have indeed passed over; but my house has also had its days of mourning. The prayers of my father were heard: he died contentedly, and even joyfully. He told me he had implored of the Gods that they would bestow on me a life as long and happy as his own, and was assured they would. Until we have seen some one grown old, our existence seems stationary. When we feel certain of having seen it (which is not early) the earth begins a little to loosen from us. Nothing now can detain me at Miletus, although when I have visited you I shall return. You must return with me, which you can do from any region but Attica. Pericles will not refuse, for you have already conciliated me his favour. In the meanwhile, do not think yourself bound by the offices of humanity, to bestow those cares on others which are all required for your own family. Do not be so imprudent as to let the most intimate of your friends persuade you to visit them. You have a child, you have a husband, and, without your presence, you possess the means of procuring every human aid for the infected. O that I were with you! to snatch you away from the approach of the distemper. But I sadly fear I should grow hard-hearted toward others, in your danger.

I must be with my Aspasia; and very soon.

O Athens! Athens! are there not too many of the dead within thy walls already? and are none there who never should have been?*

CCXXXIII. ASPASIA TO PERICLES.

Never tell me, O my Pericles, that you are suddenly changed in appearance. May every change of your figure and countenance be gradual, so that I shall not perceive it: but if you really are altered to such a degree as you describe, I must transfer my affection . . . from the first Pericles to the second. Are you jealous! If you are, it is I who am to be pitied, whose heart is destined to fly from the one to the other incessantly. In the end it will rest, it shall, it must,

* This seems to refer to Xeniades.

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on the nearest. I would write a longer letter; but it is a sad and wearisome thing to aim at playfulness where the hand is palsied by affliction. Be well; and all is well: be happy; and Athens rises up again, alert and blooming and vigorous, from between war and pestilence. Love me: for love cures all but love. How can we fear to die, how can we die, while we cling or are clung to the beloved?

CCXXXIV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

The pestilence has taken from me both my sons. You, who were ever so kind and affectionate to them, will receive a tardy recompense, in hearing that the least gentle and the least grateful did acknowledge it.

I mourn for Paralos, because he loved me; for Xanthippos, because he loved me not.

Preserve with all your maternal care our little Pericles. I can not be fonder of him than I have always been; I can only fear more for him.

Is he not with my Aspasia? What fears then are so irrational as mine? But oh! I am living in a widowed house, a house of desolation; I am living in a city of tombs and torches; and the last I saw before me were for my children.

CCXXXV. PERICLES TO ASPASIA.

It is right and orderly, that he who has partaken so largely in the prosperity of the Athenians, should close the procession of their calamities. The fever that has depopulated our city, returned upon me last night, and Hippocrates and Acron tell me that my end is near.

When we agreed, O Aspasia, in the beginning of our loves, to communicate our thoughts by writing, even while we were both in Athens, and when we had many reasons for it, we little foresaw the more powerful one that has rendered it necessary of late. We never can meet again: the laws forbid it, and love itself enforces them. Let wisdom be heard by you as imperturbably, and affection as authoritatively, as ever: and remember that the sorrow of Pericles can arise but from the bosom of Aspasia. There is only one word of tenderness we could say, which we have not said oftentimes before; and there is no consolation in it. The happy never say, and never hear said, farewell.

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Reviewing the course of my life, it appears to me at one moment as if we met but yesterday; at another as if centuries had passed within it; for within it have existed the greater part of those who, since the origin of the world, have been the luminaries of the human race. Damon called me from my music to look at Aristides on his way to exile: and my father pressed the wrist by which he was leading me along, and whispered in my ear,

"Walk quickly by; glance cautiously; it is there Miltiades is in prison."

In my boyhood Pindar took me up in his arms, when he brought to our house the dirge he had composed for the funeral of my grandfather: in my adolescence I offered the rites of hospitality to Empedocles: not long afterward I embraced the neck of Æschylus, about to abandon his country. With Sophocles I have argued on eloquence; with Euripides on polity and ethics; I have discoursed, as became an inquirer, with Protagoras and Democritus, with Anaxagoras and Meton. From Herodotus I have listened to the most instructive history, conveyed in a language the most copious and the most harmonious; a man worthy to carry away the collected suffrages of universal Greece; a man worthy to throw open the temples of Egypt, and to celebrate the exploits of Cyrus. And from Thucydides, who alone can succeed to him, how recently did my Aspasia hear with me the energetic praises of his just supremacy!

As if the festival of life were incomplete, and wanted one great ornament to crown it, Phidias placed before us, in ivory and gold, the tutelary Deity of this land, and the Zeus of Homer and Olympus.

To have lived with such men, to have enjoyed their familiarity and esteem, overpays all labours and anxieties. I were unworthy of the friendships I have commemorated, were I forgetful of the latest. Sacred it ought to be, formed as it was under the portico of Death, my friendship with the most sagacious, the most scientific, the most beneficent of philosophers, Acron and Hippocrates. If mortal could war against Pestilence and Destiny, they had been victorious. I leave them in the field: unfortunate he who finds them among the fallen!

And now, at the close of my day, when every light is dim and every guest departed, let me own that these wane before me, remembering, as I do in the pride and fulness of my heart, that Athens confided her glory, and Aspasia her happiness, to me.

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Have I been a faithful guardian? do I resign them to the custody of the Gods undiminished and unimpaired? Welcome then, welcome, my last hour! After enjoying for so great a number of years, in my public and my private life, what I believe has never been the lot of any other, I now extend my hand to the urn, and take without reluctance or hesitation what is the lot of all.

CCXXXVI. ALCIBIADES TO ASPASIA.

I returned to Athens in time to receive the last injunctions of my guardian. What I promised him, to comfort him in his departure, I dare not promise his Aspasia, lest I fail in the engagement; nevertheless I will hope that my natural unsteadiness may sometimes settle on his fixed principles. But what am I, what are all my hopes, in comparison with the last few words of this great man, surely the greatest that earth has ever seen, or ever will see hereafter! Let me repeat them to you, for they are more than consolation, and better. If on such a loss I or any one could console you, I should abominate you eternally.

I found him surrounded by those few friends whom pestilence and despair had left in the city. They had entered but a little while before me; and it appears that one or other of them had been praising him for his exploits.

"In these," replied he, "Fortune hath had her share: tell me rather, if you wish to gratify me, that never have I caused an Athenian to put on mourning."

I burst forward from the doorway, and threw my arms around his neck.

"O Pericles! my first, last, only friend! afar be that hour yet!" cried I, and my tears rolled abundantly on his cheeks. Either he felt them not, or dissembled, or disregarded them; for, seeing his visitors go away, he began with perfect calmness to give me such advice as would be the best to follow in every occurrence, and chiefly in every difficulty. When he had ended, and I was raising my head from above his pillow (for I continued in that posture, ashamed that he, who spake so composedly, should perceive my uncontrollable emotion), I remarked I knew not what upon his bosom. He smiled faintly, and said, "Alcibiades! I need not warn you against superstition: it never was among your weaknesses. Do not wonder at these amulets: above all, do not order them to be removed. The kind old nurses, who have been

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carefully watching over me day and night, are persuaded that these will save my life. Superstition is rarely so kindhearted; whenever she is, unable as we are to reverence, let us at least respect her. After the good patient creatures have found, as they must soon, all their traditional charms unavailing, they will surely grieve enough, and perhaps from some other motive than their fallability in science. Inflict not, O Alcibiades! a fresh wound upon their grief, by throwing aside the tokens of their affection. In hours like these we are the most indifferent to opinion and greatly the most sensible to kindness."

The statesman, the orator, the conqueror, the protector, had died away; the philosopher, the humane man, yet was living . . alas! few moments more.

CCXXXVII. ALCIBIADES TO ASPASIA.

Must I again, Aspasia, torment my soul? again must I trouble yours? Has the pestilence then seized me, that I want hardihood, strength, understanding, to begin my labour? No; I walk through the house of mourning, firmly, swiftly, incessantly: my limbs are alert as ever.

Write it I must. Somebody was at the house-door; admittance was, it seems, not granted readily. I heard a voice, feeble and hoarse, and, looking forth, saw two women who leaned against the lintels.

"Let her enter, let her enter: look at her: she is one of us."

These words were spoken by the younger; and maliciously. Scarcely had she uttered them when her head dropped forward. The stranger caught and supported her, and cried *help! help!* and rubbed her temples, and, gazing on her with an intensity of compassion, closed her eyelids: for death had come over them. In my horror (my fright and dastardly cowardice I should rather call it) I failed to prevent or check her.

Aspasia has then her equal on the earth!

Aspasia is all that women in their wildest wishes can desire to be; Cleone, all that the Immortals are. But she has friendship, she has sympathy: have those?

She *has*, did I say? And can nothing then bring me back my recollection? not even she! I want it not: those moments are present yet, and will never pass away.

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She asked for you.

"Aspasia," answered I, "is absent."

"Not with her husband? not with her husband?" cried she.

"Pericles," I replied, "is gone to the Blessed."

"She was with him then, while hope remained for her! I knew she would be. Tell me she was."

And saying it, she grasped my arm and looked earnestly in my face. Suddenly, as it appeared to me, she blushed slightly: on her countenance there was, momentarily, somewhat less of its paleness. She walked into the aviary: the lattice stood open: the birds were not flown, but dead. She drew back; she hesitated; she departed. I followed her: for now, and not earlier, I bethought me it was Cleone. Before I came up to her, she had asked a question of an elderly man, who opened his lips but could not answer her, and whose arm, raised with difficulty from the pavement, when it would have directed her to the object of her inquiry, dropped upon his breast. A boy was with him, gazing in wonder at the elegance and composure of her attire, such as, in these years of calamity and of indifference to seemliness, can nowhere be found in Athens. He roused himself from his listless posture, beckoned, and walked before us. Reaching the garden of Epimedea, we entered it through the house; silent, vacant, the doors broken down. Sure sign that some family, perhaps many, had, but few days since, utterly died off within its chambers. For nearly all the habitations, in all quarters of the city, are crowded with emigrants from the burghs of Attica. The pestilence is now the least appalling where it has made the most havoc. But how hideous, how disheartening, is the sudden stride before our eyes, from health and beauty to deformity and death! In this waste and desolation there was more peacefulness, I believe, than anywhere else beyond, in the whole extent of our dominions. It was not to last.

A tomb stood opposite the entrance: Cleone rushed toward it, reposed her brow against it, and said at intervals,

"I am weary: I ache throughout: I thirst bitterly: I can not read the epitaph."

The boy advanced, drew his finger slowly along, at the bottom of the letters, and said,

Surely they are plain enough.

"*Xeniades son of Charondas.*"

He turned round and looked at me, well satisfied. Cleone lowered

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her cheek to the inscription; but her knees bent under her, and she was fain to be seated on the basement.

"Cleone!" said I, . . she started at the name . . "Come, I beseech you, from that sepulchre."

"The reproof is just!" she replied . . "Here too, even here I am an alien!"

Aspasia! she will gladden your memory no more: never more will she heave your bosom with fond expectancy. There is none to whom, in the pride of your soul, you will run with her letters in your hand. He, upon whose shoulder you have read them in my presence, lies also in the grave. The last of them is written.

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MINOR PROSE PIECES.

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MINOR PROSE PIECES.

I. OPINIONS ON CÆSAR, CROMWELL, MILTON, AND BUONAPARTE.

No person has a better right than Lord Brougham to speak contemptuously of Cæsar, of Cromwell, and of Milton. Cæsar was the purest and most Attic writer of his country, and there is no trace of intemperance, in thought or expression, throughout the whole series of his hostilities. He was the most generous friend, he was the most placable enemy; he rose with moderation, and he fell with dignity. Can we wonder then at Lord Brougham's unfeigned antipathy and assumed contempt? Few well-educated men are less able to deliver a sound opinion of style than his lordship; and perhaps there are not many of our contemporaries who place a just value on Cæsar's, dissimilar as it is in all its qualities to what they turn over on the sofa-table. There is calmness, there is precision, there is a perspicuity which shows objects in their proper size and position; there is strength without strain, and superiority without assertion. I acknowledge my preference of his style, and he must permit me to add Cicero's, to that which he considers the best of all, namely his own; and he must pardon me if I entertain an early predilection for easy humour over hard vulgarity, and for graceful irony over intractable distortion. I was never an admirer, even in youth, of those abrupt and splintery sentences, which, like many coarse substances, sparkle only when they are broken, and are looked at only for their sharpnesses and inequalities.

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Cæsar and Cromwell are hung up in the same wicker basket, as an offering to the warrior God of our formidable Celt's idolatry. Cromwell was destitute of all those elegancies which adorned the Roman dictator, but he alone possessed in an equal degree all those which ensure the constancy of Fortune. Both were needful: one against an unjust and reckless aristocracy whose leader had declared that he would follow up the steps of Sulla, and cover the fields of Italy with slaughter; the other, to rescue the most religious and most conscientious of his countrymen from the persecution of an unchristian and intolerant episcopacy; and the bravest friends of ancient freedom, from torture, from mutilation, and from solitude and death in pestilential gaols. Were such the deeds of Charles? Yes; but before an infallible church had commanded us to worship him among the martyrs. Among? no, not among; above; and to the exclusion of all the rest. This was wanting as the finishing stroke of our Reformation. And was Cromwell then pure? Certainly not; but he began in sincerity; and he believed to the last that every accession of power was an especial manifestation of God's mercy. Fanaticism hath always drawn to herself such conclusions from the Bible. Power made him less pious, but more confident. God had taken him by the hand at first, and had now let him walk by himself: to show how he could walk, he strode. Religion, in the exercise of power, is more arbitrary, more intolerant, and more cruel than monarchy; and the sordid arrogance of Presbyterianism succeeded to the splendid tyranny of Episcopacy. The crozier of Laud was unbroken: those who had been the first in cursing it, seized and exercised it: it was to fall in pieces under the sword of Cromwell. To him alone are we indebted for the establishment of religious liberty. If a Vane and a Milton have acknowledged the obligation, how feeble were the voices of all men living, if the voices of all men living were raised against it. Of our English rulers Oliver holds the next place to Alfred; and it would be unjust and ignominious to station him merely on a level with the most intelligent, the most energetic, and the most patriotic, of succeeding kings. He did indeed shed blood; but the blood he shed was solely for his country, although without it he never would have risen to the Protectorate. The same can not be said of Cæsar; nor of that extraordinary personage whom some of his flatterers place beside, and some before him.

The first campaigns of Buonaparte were admirably conducted, and

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honour and glory in the highest degree are due to him for abstaining from the plunder of Italy. It would be ungenerous to seize the obvious idea that, by his vivid imagination, he probably saw in the land of his forefathers his future realm, without any such hope regarding France, and was desirous of winning those golden opinions which bear so high an interest. But Egypt seems to be the country in which the renown of conquerors is destined to be tarnished. The latent vices of the Persian, of the Macedonian, of Pompey, of Julius, of Antonius, of Octavius, shot up here and brought forth fruits after their kind. It was here also that the eagle eye of Buonaparte was befilmed; here forty thousand of the best troops in the world were defeated under his guidance, and led captive after his desertion. He lost Haiti, which he attempted to recover by force; he lost Spain, which he attempted to seize by perfidy. And what generosity or what policy did he display with Toussaint l'Ouverture or with Ferdinand? Imprisonment and a miserable death befell the braver. Is there a human heart that swells not at the deliberate murder of the intrepid and blameless Hofer? I say nothing of Palm; I say nothing of D'Enghein; even in such atoms as these he found room enough for the perpetration of a crime. They had indeed friends to mourn for them; but they were not singly worth whole nations. Their voices did not breathe courage into ten thousand breasts; children were not carried into churches to hear their names uttered with God's; if they had virtues, those virtues perished with them; Hofer's will ring eternally on every mountain and irradiate every mine of Tyrol; Universal Man, domestic, political, and religious, will be the better for him. When he was led to slaughter in Mantua, some of those Italian soldiers who had followed Buonaparte in his earliest victories shed tears. The French themselves, from the drummer on the platform to the governor in the citadel, thought of the cause that first united them in arms, and knew that it was Hofer's. Buonaparte could no more pardon bravery in his enemy than cowardice in his soldier. No expression was too virulent for Hofer, for Sir Sydney Smith, or for any who had foiled him. He spoke contemptuously of Kleber, maliciously of Hoche: he could not even refrain from an unmanly triumph on the death of the weak Moreau. If this is greatness, he certainly did not inherit it from any great man on record. Sympathy with men at large is not among their attributes, but sympathy with the courageous and enterprising may be found in all

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of them, and sometimes a glance has fallen from them so low as on the tomb of the unfortunate. The inhumanity of Napoleon was certainly not dictated by policy, whose dictates, rightly understood, never point in that direction. It is unnecessary to discuss what instruction he received in his military school, after which he had small leisure for any unconnected with his profession. And so little was his regard for literature in others, that he drove out of France the only person in that country * who had attained any eminence in it. His *Catechism* was adapted to send back the rising generation to the middle ages.

But let us consider that portion of his policy which he studied most, and on which he would have founded his power and looked forward to the establishment of his dynasty. He repudiated the woman who attached to him the best of all parties, by the sweetness of her temper and the activity of her beneficence; and he married into the only family proscribed by the prejudices of his nation. He soon grew restless with peace, and uneasy under the weight of his acquisitions. No public man, not Pitt himself, ever squandered such prodigious means so unprofitably. Anxious to aggrandise his family, could he not have given the whole of Italy to one brother, leaving Spain as his privy purse in the hands of its imbecile Bourbon? Could he not have given Poland and Polish Prussia to the King of Saxony, and have placed an eternal barrier between France and Russia? The Saxon dominions, with Prussian Silesia, would have recompensed Austria for the cession of the Venetian territories on the west of the Tagliamento. I do not suggest these practicabilities as fair dealings toward nations: I suggest them only as suitable to the interests of Napoleon, who shook and threw nations as another gamester shakes and throws dice. Germany should have been broken up into its old Hanse towns and small principalities.

With such arrangements, all feasible at one time or other, France would have been unassailable. Instead of which, her ruler fancied it necessary to make an enemy of Russia. Had it been so, he might have profited by the experience of all who had ever invaded the interior of that country. The extremities of the Muscovite empire are easily broken off, by lying at so great a distance from the trunk; added to which, they all are grafts, imperfectly granulated on an uncongenial stock, and with the rush-bound cement fresh and friable

* Madame de Staël.

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about them. Moscow never could be long retained by any hostile forces; subsistence would be perpetually cut off and carried away from them by hostile tribes, assailing and retreating as necessity might demand, and setting fire to the harvests and the forests. The inhabitants of that city, especially the commercial body and the ancient nobility, would have rejoiced at the demolition of Petersburg, which nothing could prevent, the ports of the Baltic being in the hands of Buonaparte, and Dantzic containing stores of every kind, sufficient for an army the most numerous that ever marched upon the earth. For the Asiatic have contained, in all ages, less than a fifth of fighting men, the rest being merchants, husbandmen, drovers, artisans, and other followers of the camp. The stores had been conveyed by the coast, instead of employing two-thirds of the cavalry; and the King of Sweden had been invited to take possession of a fortress (for city there would have been none) protecting a province long under his crown, and reluctantly torn away from it. No man ever yet obtained the lasting renown of a consummate general, who committed the same mistakes as had been committed in the same position by those before him; who suffered great reverses by great improvidence; who never rose up again after one discomfiture; or who led forth army upon army fruitlessly. Napoleon, in the last years of his sovranty, fought without aim, vanquished without glory, and perished without defeat.

Did Gustavus Adolphus, did Frederick, did Washington, ever experience a great reverse by committing a great imprudence? For on this main question rests the solid praise of generalship. Buonaparte, after affronting every potentate of every dimension by the rudeness of his nature and the insolence of his domination, left to every one of them sufficient power to retaliate. Surely he must have read his Machiavelli upside-down! A king should never be struck unless in a vital part. Cromwell, with many scruples, committed not this mistake: Buonaparte, with none, committed it. The shadow of Cromwell's name overawed the most confident and haughty. He intimidated Holland, he humiliated Spain, and he twisted the supple Mazarine, the ruler of France, about his finger. All those nations had then attained the summit of their prosperity; all were unfriendly to the rising power of England; all trembled at the authority of that single man who coerced at once her aristocracy, her priesthood, and her factions. No agent of equal potency and equal moderation had

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appeared upon earth before. He walked into a den of lions, and scourged them growling out: Buonaparte was pushed into a menagerie of monkeys, and fainted at their grimaces. His brother's bell and Oudinot's grenadiers frightened them off, and saved him. Meteors look larger than fixed stars, and strike with more admiration the beholder. Those who know not what they are, call them preternatural. They venerate in Buonaparte what they would ridicule in a gipsy on the road-side; his lucky and unlucky days, his ruling star, his ascendant. They bend over his emetic with gravity, and tell us that poison has no power over him. Nevertheless, the very men who owed their fortunes to him found him incompetent to maintain them in security. In the whole of Europe there was one single great man opposed to him, wanting all the means of subsistence for an army, and thwarted in all his endeavours by those for whose liberation he fought. His bugles on the Pyrenees dissolved the trance of Europe. He showed the world that military glory may be intensely bright without the assumption of sovranty, and that history is best occupied with it when she merely transcribes his orders and despatches. Englishmen will always prefer the true and modest to the false and meretricious: and every experienced eye will estimate a Vatican fresco more highly than a staircase transparency. Rudeness, falsehood, malignity, and revenge, have belonged in common to many great conquerors, but never to one great man. Cromwell had indulged in the least vile of these; but on his assumption of power he recollected that he was a gentleman. No burst of rage, no sally of ribaldry, no expression of contemptuousness, was ever heard from the Lord Protector. He could subdue or conciliate or spell-bind the master-spirits of his age: but it is a genius of a far different order that is to seize and hold Futurity: it must be such a genius as Shakespeare's or Milton's. No sooner was Cromwell in his grave, than all he had won for himself and for his country vanished. If we must admire the successful, however brief and hollow the advantages of their success, our admiration is not due to those whose resources were almost inexhaustible, and which nothing but profligate imprudence could exhaust, but to those who resisted great forces with means apparently inadequate, such as Kosciusko and Hofer, Hannibal and Sertorius, Alexander and Cæsar, Charles of Sweden and Frederick of Prussia. Above all these, and indeed above all princes, stands high Gustavus Adolphus; one of whose armies in the

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space of six weeks had seen the estuary of the Elbe and the steeples of Vienna; another, if a fever had not wasted it on the Lake of Como, would within less time have chaunted Luther's Hymn in St. Peter's. But none of these potentates had attempted the downfall or the disgrace of England. Napoleon, on the contrary, stood at the head of that confederacy whose orators were consulting the interests of France in the British parliament. He has left to the most turbulent and unprincipled of them a very memorable lesson. The schoolmaster is abroad in the guise of Buonaparte. He reminds them how, when his hands were full, they dropped what they held by grasping at what they could not hold: how he made enemies of those who might have been neutrals or friends: how he was driven out by weaker men than himself: and how he sank at last the unpitied victim of disappointed ambition. Lord Brougham will not allow us to contemplate greatness at our leisure: he will not allow us indeed to look at it for a moment. Cæsar must be stript of all his laurels and left bald, or some rude soldier, with bemocking gestures, must be thrust before his triumph. If he fights, he does not know how to hold his sword; if he speaks, he speaks vile Latin. I wonder that Cromwell fares no better; if, signal as were his earlier services to his country, he lived a hypocrite and he died a traitor. Milton is indeed less pardonable. He adhered through good report and through evil report (and there was enough of both) to those who had asserted liberty of conscience, and who alone were able to maintain it.

But an angry cracked voice is now raised against that eloquence

"Of which all Europe rang from side to side."

I shall make only a few remarks on his English, and a few preliminary on the importance of style in general, which none understood better than he. The greater part of those who are most ambitious of it are unaware of all its value. Thought does not separate man from the brutes; for the brutes think: but man alone thinks beyond the moment and beyond himself. Speech does not separate them; for speech is common to all perhaps, more or less articulate, and conveyed and received through different organs in the lower and more inert. Man's thought, which seems imperishable, loses its form, and runs along from proprietor to impropriator, like any other transitory thing, unless it is invested so becomingly and nobly that no successor can improve upon it, by any new fashion or combination. For want of

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dignity or beauty, many good things are passed and forgotten; and much ancient wisdom is overrun and hidden by a rampant verdure, succulent but unsubstantial. It would be invidious to bring forward proofs of this out of authors in poetry and prose, now living or lately dead. A distinction must, however, be made between what falls upon many, like rain, and what is purloined from a cistern or a conduit belonging to another man's house. There are things which were another's before they were ours, and are not the less ours for that; not less than my estate is mine because it was my grandfather's. There are features, there are voices, there are thoughts, very similar in many; and when ideas strike the same chord in any two with the same intensity, the expression must be nearly the same. Let those who look upon style as unworthy of much attention, ask themselves how many, in proportion to men of genius, have excelled in it. In all languages, ancient and modern, are there ten prose-writers at once harmonious, correct, and energetic? Harmony and correctness are not uncommon separately, and force is occasionally with each; but where, excepting in Milton, where, among all the moderns, is energy to be found always in the right place? Even Cicero is defective here, and sometimes in the most elaborate of his orations. In the time of Milton it was not customary for men of abilities to address to the people at large what might inflame their passions. The appeal was made to the serious, to the well-informed, to the learned, and was made in the language of their studies. The phraseology of our Bible, on which no subsequent age has improved, was thought to carry with it solemnity and authority; and even when popular feelings were to be aroused to popular interests, the language of the prophets was preferred to the language of the vulgar. Hence, amid the complicated antagonisms of war there was more austerity than ferocity. The gentlemen who attended the court avoided the speech as they avoided the manners of their adversaries. Waller, Cowley, and South, were resolved to refine what was already pure gold, and inadvertently threw into the crucible many old family jewels, deeply enchased within it. Eliot, Pym, Selden, and Milton, reverenced their father's house, and retained its rich language unmodified. Lord Brougham would make us believe that scarcely a sentence in Milton is easy, natural, and vernacular. Nevertheless, in all his dissertations, there are many which might appear to have been written in our days, if indeed any writer in our days were endowed with the same might and

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majesty. Even in his *Treatise on Divorce*, where the Bible was most open to him for quotations, and where he might be the most expected to recur to the grave and antiquated, he has often employed, in the midst of theological questions and juridical formularies, the plainest terms of his contemporaries. Even his arguments against prelacy, where he rises into poetry like the old prophets, and where his ardent words assume in their periphery the rounded form of verse, there is nothing stiff or constrained. I remember a glorious proof of this remark, which I believe I have quoted before, but no time is lost by reading it twice.

> "... But when God commands to take the trumpet,
> And blow a dolorous or thrilling blast,
> It rests not with man's will what he shall say,
> Or what he shall conceal."

Was ever anything more like the inspiration it refers to? Where is the harshness in it? where is the inversion?

The style usually follows the conformation of the mind. Solemnity and stateliness are Milton's chief characteristics. Nothing is less solemn, less stately, less composed, or less equable, than Lord Brougham's. When he is most vivacious, he shows it by twitches of sarcasm; and when he springs highest, it is from agony. He might have improved his manner by recurring to Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, equally discontented politicians: but there was something of high breeding in their attacks, and more of the rapier than of the bludgeon. He found their society uncongenial to him, and trundled home in preference the sour quarter-cask of Smollett. Many acrid plants throw out specious and showy flowers; few of these are to be found in his garden. What then has he? I will tell you what he has: more various and greater talents than any other man ever was adorned with, who had nothing of genius and little of discretion. He has exhibited a clear compendious proof, that a work of extraordinary fiction may be elaborated in the utter penury of all those qualities which we usually assign to imagination. Between the language of Milton and Brougham there is as much difference as between an organ and a bagpipe. One of these instruments fills, and makes to vibrate, the amplest, the loftiest, the most venerable edifices, and accords with all that is magnificent and holy; the other is followed by vile animals in fantastical dresses and antic gestures, and surrounded by the clamorous and disorderly.

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II. INSCRIPTION FOR A STATUE AT S. IVES.

OLIVER CROMWELL,
a good son, a good husband, a good father,
a good citizen, a good ruler
both in war and peace,
was born in this town.
To know his publick acts,
open the History of England,
where it exhibits in few pages
(alas too few!)
the title of Commonwealth.

III. SIR ROBERT PEEL AND MONUMENTS TO PUBLIC MEN.

Statues are now rising in every quarter of our metropolis, and mallet and chisel are the chief instruments in use. Whatever is conducive to the promotion of the arts ought undoubtedly to be encouraged; but love in this instance, quite as much as in any, ought neither to be precipitate nor blind. A true lover of his country should be exempted from the pain of blushes, when a foreigner inquires of him, "*Whom does this statue represent? and for what merits was it raised?*" The defenders of their country, not the dismemberers of it, should be first in honour; the maintainers of the laws, not the subverters of them, should follow next. I may be askt by the studious, the contemplative, the pacific, whether I would assign a

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higher station to any public man than to a Milton and a Newton. My answer is plainly and loudly, *Yes*. But the higher station should be in streets, in squares, in houses of parliament; such are their places: our vestibules and our libraries are best adorned by poets, philosophers, and philanthropists. There is a feeling which street-walking and public-meeting men improperly call *loyalty;* a feeling intemperate and intolerant, smelling of dinner and wine and toasts, which swells their stomachs and their voices at the sound of certain names reverberated by the newspaper press. As little do they know about the proprietary of these names as pot-wallopers know about the candidates at a borough election, and are just as vociferous and violent. A few days ago I received a most courteous invitation to be named on a Committee for erecting a statue to Jenner. It was impossible for me to decline it; and equally was it impossible to abstain from the observations which I am now about to state. I recommended that the statue should be placed before a public hospital, expressing my sense of impropriety in confounding so great a benefactor of mankind, in any street or square or avenue, with the Dismemberer of America and his worthless sons. Nor would I willingly see him among the worn-out steam engines of parliamentary debates. The noblest parliamentary men who had nothing to distribute, not being ministers, are without statues. The illustrious Burke, the wisest, excepting Bacon, who at any time sat within the people's house; Romilly, the sincerest patriot of his day: Huskisson, the most intelligent in commercial affairs; have none. Peel has become popular, not by his incomparable merits, but by his untimely death. Shall we never see the day when Oliver and William mount the chargers of Charles and George; and when a royal swindler is superseded by the purest and most exalted of our heroes, Blake?

Now the fever hath somewhat subsided which came over the people from the grave of Sir Robert Peel, there is room for a few observations on his decease and on its consequences. All public writers, I believe, have expatiated on his character, comparing him with others who, within our times, have occupied the same position. My own opinion has invariably been that he was the wisest of all our statesmen; and certainly, though he found reason to change his sentiments and his measures, he changed them honestly, well-

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weighed, always from conviction, and always for the better. He has been compared, and seemingly in no spirit of hostility or derision, with a Castlereagh, a Perceval, an Addington, a Canning. Only one of these is worthy of notice, namely Canning, whose brilliancy made his shallowness less visible, and whose graces of style and elocution threw a veil over his unsoundness and lubricity. Sir Robert Peel was no satirist or epigrammatist: he was only a statesman in public life, only a virtuous and friendly man in private. *Par negotiis, nec supra.* Walpole alone possessed his talents for business. But neither Peel nor his family were enriched from the spoils of his country; Walpole spent in building and pictures more than double the value of his hereditary estate, and left the quadruple to his descendants.

Dissimilar from Walpole, and from commoner and coarser men who occupied the same office, Peel forbade that a name which he had made illustrious should be degraded and stigmatised by any title of nobility. For he knew that all those titles had their origin and nomenclature from military services, and belong to military men, like their epaulets and spurs and chargers. They sound well enough against the sword and helmet, strangely in law-courts and cathedrals: but, reformer as he was, he could not reform all this; he could only keep clear of it in his own person.

I now come to the main object of my letter.

Subscriptions are advertised for the purpose of raising monuments to Sir Robert Peel; and a motion has been made in Parliament for one in Westminster Abbey at the public expense. Whatever may be the precedents, surely the house of God should contain no object but such as may remind us of His presence and our duty to Him. Long ago I proposed that *ranges* of statues and busts should commemorate the great worthies of our country. All the lower parts of our National Gallery might be laid open for this purpose. Even the best monuments in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's are deformities to the edifice. Let us not continue this disgrace. Deficient as we are in architects, we have many good statuaries, and we might well employ them on the statues of illustrious commanders, and the busts of illustrious statesmen and writers. Meanwhile our cities, and especially the commercial, would, I am convinced, act more wisely, and more satisfactorily to the relict of the deceased, if, instead of statues, they erected schools and almshouses, with an inscription to his memory.

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We glory in about sixty whose busts and statues may occupy what are now the "deep solitudes and awful cells" in our National Gallery. Our literary men of eminence are happily more numerous than the political or the warlike, or both together. There is only one class of them which might be advantageously excluded, namely, the theological; and my reasons are these. First, their great talents were chiefly employed on controversy; secondly, and consequently, their images would excite dogmatical discord, every sect of the Anglican Church, and every class of Dissenters, complaining of undue preferences. Painture and sculpture lived in the midst of corruption, lived throughout it, and seemed indeed to draw vitality from it, as flowers the most delicate from noxious air; but they collapsed at the searching breath of free inquiry, and could not abide persecution. The torch of philosophy never kindled the suffocating faggot, under whose smoke Theology was mistaken for Religion. Theology had, until now, been speculative and quiescent: she abandoned to Philosophy these humbler qualities: instead of allaying and dissipating, as Philosophy had always done, she excited and she directed, animosities. Oriental in her parentage, and keeping up her wide connections in that country, she acquired there all the artifices most necessary to the furtherance of her designs: among the rest was ventriloquism, which she quite perfected, making her words seem to sound from above and from below and from every side around. Ultimately, when men had fallen on their faces at this miracle, she assumed the supreme power. Kings were her lackies, and nations the dust under her palfrey's hoof. By her sentence Truth was gagged, scourged, branded, cast down on the earth in manacles; and Fortitude, who had stood at Truth's side, was fastened with nails and pulleys to the stake. I would not revive by any images, in the abode of the graceful and the gentle Arts, these sorrowful reminiscences. The vicissitudes of the world appear to be bringing round again the spectral Past. Let us place great men between it and ourselves: they are all tutelar: not the warrior and the statesman only; not only the philosopher; but also the historian who follows them step by step, and the poet who secures us from peril and dejection by his countercharm. Philosophers in most places are unwelcome: but there is no better reason why Shaftesbury and Hobbes should be excluded from our gallery, than why Epicurus should have been from Cicero's or Zeno from Lucullus's.

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Of our sovrans, I think Alfred, Cromwell, and William III. alone are eligible; and they, because they opposed successfully the subverters of the laws. Three viceroys of Ireland will deservedly be placed in the same receptacle; Sir John Perrot, Lord Chesterfield, and (in due time) the last Lord-Deputy. One Speaker, one only, of the Parliament; he without whom no Parliament would be now existing; he who declared to Henry IV. that, until all public grievances were removed, no subsidy should be granted. The name of this Speaker may be found in Rapin; English historians talk about facts, forgetting men.

Admirals and generals are numerous and conspicuous. Drake, Blake, Rodney, Jervis, Nelson, Collingwood; the subduer of Algiers beaten down for the French to occupy; and the defender of Acre, the first who defeated, discomfited, routed, broke, and threw into shameful flight, Buonaparte. Our generals are Marlborough, Peterborough, Wellington, and that successor to his fame in India, who established the empire that was falling from us, who achieved in a few days two arduous victories, who never failed in any enterprise, who accomplished the most difficult with the smallest expenditure of blood, who corrected the disorders of the military, who gave the soldier an example of temperance, the civilian of simplicity and frugality, and whose sole (but exceedingly great) reward was the approbation of our greatest men.

With these come the statesmen of the Commonwealth, the students of Bacon, the readers of Philip Sidney, the companions of Algernon, the precursors of Locke and Newton. Opposite to them are Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton: lower in dignity, Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Cowper, Keats, Scott, Burns, Shelley, Southey, Byron, Wordsworth; the author of *Hohenlinden* and the *Battle of the Baltic;* and the glorious woman who equalled these two animated works in her *Ivan* and *Casabianca*. Historians have but recently risen up among us: and long be it before, by command of Parliament, the chisel grates on the brow of a Napier, a Grote, and a Macaulay!

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IV. TO CORNELIUS AT MUNICH.

On coming to England, and on looking at the Cartoons exhibited for decorating the Houses of Parliament, you will wonder, Cornelius, that the most important facts and most illustrious men have been overlooked. The English are certainly less sensitive to national glory than to party politics; to past achievements than to passing celebrity. Wilkes excited more enthusiasm than Hampden. It appears to be certain that the Protector Cromwell will be expunged from the pictorial history of the nation; of that nation which he raised to the summit of political power. It is contended that he usurped his authority. We will not argue the point, nor take the trouble to demonstrate that the greatest and best princes, in many countries, have been usurpers. Without great services none of them could ever have been invested with sufficient power to assume the first dignity of the State. William of Normandy was manifestly a usurper; and, if breaking the direct line of succession is usurpation, so was William the Third. Henry the Fourth and Henry the Seventh were usurpers also, yet their reigns were signally beneficial to their people. And to Richard the Third, whatever may have been his crimes in the ascent to sovereignty, the nation at large is perhaps more indebted for provident statutes of perdurable good, than to any other of her kings. But the glory of them all is cast into obscurity by Cromwell. He humbled in succession the dominant powers of Europe, at a time when they were governed by the ablest men, and had risen to the zenith of their prosperity. Spain, France, Holland, crouched before him: and the soldiers of Gustavus Adolphus, the greatest king the world ever beheld, thought he had risen from the grave to accomplish the delivery of nations. For how little, in comparison, is France

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indebted to Napoleon! Yet both king and people are united in raising a monument to his memory. Compare the posthumous honours conferred by the two great nations on the two great men. The body of the one is brought back from the extremities of the ocean, to be venerated by a people he had reduced to servitude; the body of the other was treated as the vilest malefactor's, in the midst of a nation he had vindicated from double slavery, the slavery of a lawless prince and an intolerant priesthood. It is enough for Frenchmen that Napoleon had once humbled the enemies of France. We, who judge more calmly, judge that whatever he did was done for the advancement of his power and the perpetuation of his dynasty. He had the quickest and the shortest sight of all men living, and his arrogance brought into France the nations that subdued her. Different in all these points was Oliver. Never was man more bravely humane, or more tranquilly energetic. He stood above fear, above jealousy, above power: he was greater than all things but his country.

The English are erecting a column and statue to Nelson. No such monument has been raised to Blake, because he fought for a country without a king at the head of it. This courageous and virtuous man abstained from party and from politics, and would have defended his country even under the king who sold her. No action of Nelson himself is more glorious than the action of Blake at Cadiz, and his character, on every side, is without a stain; but in England the authorities and the arts neglect him.

"Caret quia *rege* sacro."

In the list of the committee which is to decide on fit subjects for painting the Houses of Parliament, you will find the name of Eastlake, a good painter, and a good scholar; and of Rogers, endowed with every quality of a gentleman, and with an exquisite judgment in everything relating to literature and the fine arts. Yet I doubt if either of them would not prefer an allegory in the *Faery Queen*, or a witchery in *Faust*, for a decoration of the Chambers, if highly picturesque, to the most appropriate scene in parliamentary annals, if less so. English history, in fact, is now represented without living figures, and worked by machinery. We see the events, and wonder where are the actors. The later historians keep them carefully out of sight, and make their own voices suffice for all within the boxes they exhibit.

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The histories of other nations are alive with human agents; the earth moves and heaves with their energies; we see not only the work they have done, but we see them doing it. Whereas, in our own sandy deserts, the only things astir are small animals intent on their burrows, or striving to possess a knot of fresh herbage. All beyond is indistinct: if ever we come to it, we find only scanty eminences, under which are evanescent features and weightless bones: we trample them down and walk back again.

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V. THE QUARTERLY REVIEW.

THE *Quarterly Review* for December, 1849, was shown to me this morning, for the sake of a note in p. 130. A reviewer comes valiantly forth in his obscurity, and strikes at me in the bottom of a page, without provocation and without aim. Nothing of mine was in question: the subject was utterly remote. Rabid animals run straight: could not this? is he blind? apparently. The *Quarterly* would prolong its painful struggles for existence by clinging to my name.

Speaking of the Duke of Wellington's Dispatches, the Reviewer observes, "When French people could not resist the evidence of all great gifts and noble qualities with which that record was filled—when they owned that it would not do to persist in their old vein of disparagement now the world had before it that series of writings in which it was impossible to say whether one should admire most, the range of knowledge, reflection, sense, and wisdom, or the *unaffected display* of every manly, modest, and human feeling under an almost infinite variety of circumstances, and all conveyed in language of such inimitable simplicity, so thoroughly the style becoming a Captain and Statesman of the most *illustrious class*;—when this was the *result* in France, the *home faction* saw it was time to consider the matter, and they undoubtedly showed, and have continued to show, proper *signs of repentance*. The exceptions are very few. Here in England we know of none at all in what can be called society—of none in the periodical press, *beyond* its very lowest disgraces. Among authors," &c.

It would be well if the writer of this verbose and rambling note had *attempted*, at least the "inimitable simplicity" which he has been taught by some wiser authority to commend. No man ever praised more unreservedly or more heartily the Duke of Wellington's style,

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honesty, wisdom, and achievements, than I have always done; and though his Grace may care little for such commendations, he will probably, if ever he hears of them, set them somewhere apart from the *Quarterly Reviewer's*.

The Reviewer proceeds to number me among the *home faction*. Certainly I never was "at home" in it, and never knew where its home was; I never was at a public dinner, at a club, or hustings. I never influenced or attempted to influence a vote; yet many, and not only of my own tenants, have askt me to whom they should give theirs. If the Reviewer is desirous of obtaining any favour from the Duke of Wellington, let me assure him that the safest way is by descending from flattery to truth. Even the Duke (as future ages, like the present, will call him) could not make his actions greater than they are; they can only be diminisht, as the steps of holy places, by the grovelling knees and importunate kisses of fanatic worshippers. When I commend the conciseness, the manliness, the purity, of the Duke's style, it is not, as it must be in the Reviewer, from hearsay and tradition. Let him also be taught, and repeat with less ostentation and more reverence, that far above the faded flowers wherewith his puny hands have bestrewn the great man's road, our Deliverer has confirmed the religious, more than all the theologians in the country, in the belief that there is a superintending and a ruling Power, under which, and by whose especial guidance, a single arm can scatter myriads of the powerful, and raise up prostrate nations.

I must now mount again the "bad eminence" on which it hath pleased this gentleman to place me. "Among authors *of* books *of* any sort *of* note," he continues, "verse or prose, we recollect *of* none, unless Mr. W. Savage Landor, who, however, clings with equal pertinacity to his ancient abuse of Buonaparte as a *blockhead and a coward*—of Byron as a *rhymer wholly devoid of genius or wit*—of Pitt as a *villain*—of Fox as a *scoundrel*—of Canning as a *scamp—and so on.*"

Now I appeal to you, and to every man who, however negligently or however malignantly, has read my writings, whether my education and habits of life have permitted me such language. It is such as no gentleman could either have used or have attributed to another. Even if the phrases were reduced to synonymes of more decorum, the falsehood of the statement would remain. I have never called Buonaparte a *blockhead* or a *coward*. I would not call by such a name even the writer of this criticism. Buonaparte committed many gross errors,

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some in polity, some in war; greater indeed and more numerous than any leader of equal eminence. He lost three great armies: he abandoned three in defeat.

It is curious that the *Quarterly Review* should rail against my opinion on Buonaparte, when the only man of genius connected with it, Southey, far exceeded me in hostility to that sanguinary and selfish despot. His laws against the press were more numerous and more stringent than ever had existed in any country, and alienate from him every true friend of liberty and letters. His cruelty to Toussaint L'Ouverture (omitting an infinitude of others) was such as Charles IX. would have discountenanced, and such as could hardly have been perpetrated by his compatriot Eccellino. His miscalculations in Syria, in Egypt, in Spain, in Germany, in Russia, where an open road to conquest lay before him along the Baltic, will supplant in another age the enthusiasm that now supports him. It is singular that a *Quarterly Reviewer* should assail me for joining all his leaders in hostility to this destroyer; and scarcely is it less so that I should continue on terms of intimacy with many the most prominent of his admirers. Throughout life it has been my good fortune to enjoy the unbroken and unaltered friendship of virtuous and illustrious men whose political opinions have been adverse. If it is any honour, it has been conferred on me, to have received from Napoleon's heir the literary work he composed in prison, well knowing, as he did, and expressing his regret for, my sentiments on his uncle. The explosion of the first cannon against Rome threw us apart for ever.

Of Byron I never have spoken as a *mere rhymer;* I never have represented him as destitute of genius or of wit. He had much of both, with much energy, not always well applied. Lord Malmesbury has informed us that Mr. Pitt entered into the war against France contrary to his own opinion, to gratify the king. If so, the word *villain* would carry with it too feeble a sound for me to employ it, even in the company of such persons as my critic, supposing me ever to have been conversant in such. My intimacy with the friends and near relatives of Mr. Fox would have certainly closed my lips against the utterance of the appellation of *scoundrel* in regard to him. He had more and warmer friends than any statesman upon record: he was ingenuous, liberal, learned, philosophical: he was the delight of social life, the ornament of domestic. Mr. Fox was a man of genius, and (what in the present day is almost as rare) a gentleman. Specimens

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of either character may never have fallen in the Reviewer's way; and if peradventure they should have, probably it was not very closely, and his inexperience may easily have mistaken them. Reverence for the unknown, or for the dimly seen, may indeed be common to the vulgar; but here is an instance that it is by no means universal.

Mr. Canning was a graceful writer both in poetry and prose: he had also the gift of eloquence in debate. His conduct towards his colleague in the Administration lost him all his popularity, which was not recovered by his asking an office from the Minister he had traduced and fought. The word *scamp* was applied to Mr. Canning by the late Lord Yarmouth, who certainly ought to have known its full signification. It was on the morning when, second to Lord Castlereagh, he saved Mr. Canning's life, desiring his cousin to give "the *scamp* a chance," by taking into the field, not his own well-tried pistols, but those which Lord Yarmouth had brought with him and laid upon the table. This account I received from the only other person then present, and now living. But whatever I may continue to think of Mr. Canning, I prefer a phraseology somewhat circuitous to a monosyllable better adapted to the style and temper of the Reviewer than to mine.

Few writers have been less obnoxious to rudeness and impertinence than I have been; and I should abstain from noticing them now, had they been unaccompanied by a misrepresentation of my manners and a forgery of my words. These are grave offences, such as public justice takes out of private hands. I remember a fable of Phædrus, in which a mischievous youth cast a pebble at a quiet way-farer, who, instead of resentment or remonstrance, advises him to perform the same exploit on a dignitary then coming up. I am quieter than the dignitary, and even than the quiet man. Instead of sending to the cross or to the whipping-post the mischievous youth who passes over the road to cast his pebble at me, although I might not perhaps beg him off from the latter inflictions, I would entreat his employer, the moment I could learn the editor's name, to continue the payment of his wages, and to throw in an additional trifle for his (however ill-directed) originality. I suspect he will neither be so graceful nor so proud as he might be on obtaining this notice. Could he have hoped it? But thus is extracted from the dryest and hardest lichen in the coldest regions, where men are the most diminutive, a nutritious sustenance, often remedial in a low disease.

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VI. A STORY OF SANTANDER.

Don Luis Cabeza-de-Moro was a widower, with two sons, Antonio and Ignacio. His younger brother, named also Ignacio, had married a rich heiress in the island of Cuba. Both parents died, leaving an only daughter, seven years old, to the guardianship of Don Luis, and intimating a wish, and providing by will and testament, that Iñes in due time should espouse her cousin Ignacio.

Don Luis was rejoiced at the injunction: for he disliked his elder son from the cradle. This was remarkable; especially as his lady, the Doña Pedrila, had continued long without offspring, and Antonio was her first-born. Beside which, there were mysteries, and signs, and tokens, such as ought to have taught him better. His whole household were amazed, and edified, and awed, at the result of supplications which, after four years of fruitless marriage, had produced this blessing: and the *Moor's head*, the blazon of the family, was displayed by them, with greater pride than ever, in the balcony of the ancient mansion-house. About a year before this event, an Irish ensign had entered the service of Spain. Leave of absence was given him to visit his maternal uncle, the dean of Santander, near which city was the residence of Don Luis. Subsequently, Doña Pedrila saw him so often, and was so impressed by his appearance, that it was reported in the family, and the report was by no means discouraged by the dean, that Ensign Lucius O'Donnell, now entitled Don Lucio, had been dreamt of by Doña Pedrila, not once only, or occasionally, but on the three successive vigils of the three glorious saints who were more especially the patrons of the house. Under the impression of these dreams, there was a wonderful likeness of the infant to Don

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Lucio, which Don Luis was the first to perceive, and the last to communicate. It extended to the colour of the hair and of the eyes. Surely it ought to have rendered a reasonable man more pious and paternal, but it produced quite a contrary effect. He could hardly endure to hear the three glorious saints mentioned; and, whenever he uttered their names, he elongated the syllables with useless emphasis and graceless pertinacity. Moreover, in speaking of the child to its numerous admirers, he swore that the creature was ugly and white-blooded. Within two more years, Doña Pedrila bore another son to him, and died. This son, Ignacio, came into the world a few months before his cousin Iñes, and the fathers were confident that the union of two such congenial names would secure the happiness of the children, and of their posterity.

Before Antonio had completed quite eleven years, he was sent for his education to Salamanca, not as a collegian, but as a pupil under an old officer, a friend of Don Luis, who, being somewhat studious, had retired to end his days in that city. Here the boy, although he made no unsatisfactory progress in polite literature, engaged more willingly with his tutor in manly exercises, likewise in singing and playing on the guitar. He was never invited home for three entire years; but Ignacio, who was of the mildest temper and kindest disposition, remembering the playfulness and fondness of Antonio, united his entreaties with those of Iñes, that he might return. Don Luis, in reply, threw a leg over a knee.

"Uncle," said Iñes, "he cannot ride on that knee all the way from Salamanca; send my mule for him, saddle, bridle, and ropes, and the little bit of gilt leather for the crupper, from the shrine of blessed St. Antonio, his patron, no less than the patron of mules and horses. Ignacio says we must have him, and have him we will, if prayers and masses go for anything. Can not we sing? can not we play? What would you wish for his studies? heresy, magic, freemasonry, chemistry, necromancy? We want him, dear uncle; we want him sadly with us. You always give us what we ask for in reason. Come now, a kiss, uncle! and then the mule out of the stable. Come; we will help you to write the letter, as you are somewhat out of practice, and I know how to fold one up, after a trial or two."

No one could resist this appeal: Antonio was sent for; he returned in raptures. On his first entrance, the lively eyes of Iñes, full of curiosity, were bent toward him; but he regarded her not; he threw

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his arms round Ignacio, lifted him off the ground, set him down again, gazed on his face, and burst suddenly into tears.

"Ignacio, my Ignacio, how light you are! how thin! how pallid! how weak!"

Don Luis looked on, and muttered something inaudible. Antonio, fearful of having offended his worthy genitor by neglect of duty, sprang from his dejection, clasped the waist of Don Luis, and then falling at his feet, asked his blessing. Don Luis, with bitter composure, prayed the three saints to bestow it, as they might well do, he said, on the young Señor Don Antonio now before them. The boy kissed his hand and thanked him fervently; and now, in his inconsiderate joyousness, another spring forward; but he stopped in the midst of it, and instead of running up at once to Iñes, who bit her lip and pinched her veil, he turned again to Ignacio, and asked him in a whisper whether cousins were forced to kiss, after an absence of only three years?

"Certainly not," replied Ignacio. But Iñes came up, and pouting a little, gave him her hand spontaneously, and helped him moreover to raise it to his lips, saying, as he blushed at it, "You simpleton! you coward!"

Antonio bore *simpleton* pretty well; *coward* amused him, and gave him spirit; he seized her hand afresh, and kept it within his, although she pushed the other against his breast; the little hand, with its five arches of pink polished nails half hidden in his waistcoat, the little hand sprouting forth at him, soft and pulpy as that downy bud which swells and bursts into the vine-leaf.

Antonio never saw in her any other object than the betrothed of his brother, and never was with her so willingly as with him. Nor indeed did Iñes care much about Antonio, but wished he could be a little more attentive and polite, and sing in a chamber as willingly as in a chestnut-tree. After six weeks, Don Luis observed that Antonio was interrupting the studies of Ignacio, and neglecting his own. Accordingly he was sent back to Salamanca, where he continued five whole years without recall. At this time the French armies had invaded Spain; the old officer, Don Pablo Espinosa, who directed the studies of Antonio, wrote to his father that the gallant youth, now in his twentieth year, desired to be enrolled in the regiment of the province, next to himself, as a volunteer and a private. In the fulness of joy, Don Luis announced these tidings to Ignacio and Iñes. They

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both turned pale, both threw themselves on the floor before him, entreating and imploring him to forbid it. Their supplications and their tears for many days were insufficient to mollify Don Luis. By this time, a large division of the French army had surrendered, and insurrection was universal. Don Pablo was constrained, by three urgent letters, of which the father's was however the least so, to leave his pupil at the university: he himself took the field, and perished in the first battle. Antonio, disappointed in his hopes of distinction, swore to avenge his tutor's death and his country's honour. His noble person, his extraordinary strength, his eloquent tongue, his unquestioned bravery, soon placed him at the head of many students, and he was always the first to advise and execute the most difficult and dangerous enterprises.

Toward the north of Spain the enemy had rallied, and had won indeed the battle of Rio-Seco, but within a month were retreating in all directions. Antonio, bound by no other duties than those of a volunteer, acceded at last to the earnest and repeated wishes of his brother and cousin, that he would in this interval return to them. Don Luis said he would be a madman wherever he was, but might return if he liked it, both he and his guitar. On the first of August, 1808, the visitor passed again the threshold of his native home. Covered as he was with dust, he entered the apartment where the family were seated. The sun was setting, and the supper had just been taken off the table, excepting two small flasks of red and white wine, part of a water-melon, and some pomegranates. In fact, more was remaining than had been eaten or removed, not reckoning a radish of extraordinary length and tenuity, which the Señorita Iñes was twisting round her thumb. It was no waste; there was not any use for it; many things in the house were better to mend harness with. Moreover, on the sideboard there were sundry yellow peaches, of such a size, weight, and hardness, that only a confident and rash invader would traverse the country in the season of their maturity, unless he had collected the most accurate information that powder was deficient in the arsenals.

At the dusty apparition, at the beard and whiskers never seen before, at the broad and belted shoulder, at the loud spurred boot, at the long and hurried stride toward the party, Don Luis stared; Don Ignacio stared; Doña Iñes cast her eyes on the ground and said, "Tis he!" The brother, whether he heard her or not, repeated the

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words "tis he!" and rushed into his arms. Don Luis himself rose slowly from his chair, and welcomed him. Iñes was the nearest to him, and seemed abashed.

"My cousin!" said Antonio, bending down to her, "I have yet to remove in part the name of coward," and lifting her hand from her apron, he kissed the extremities of her fingers. "Brother! one more embrace, and then for those pomegranates: I am thirsty to death. God be with you, my dear, kind, honoured father! you look upon me with more than usual, and much more than merited, affection." Don Luis did indeed regard him with much complacency. "I must empty those two flasks, my beloved father, to your health." So saying, he poured the contents of one into a capacious beaker, with about the same quantity of water, and swallowed it at a draught.

"What lady have you engulfed with that enormous gasp?" asked Iñes, with timid shyness; "will she never rise up, do you think, in judgment against you?"

"Pray mix me the flask near you," said he, "in like manner as the last, and then perhaps I may answer you, my sweet cousin; but tell me, Iñes, whether I did not rasp your nails with my thirsty and hard lips?"

"Yes, and with that horrid brake above," said she, pouring out the wine and water, and offering it.

Don Luis all this time had kept his eyes constantly on his son, and began to prognosticate in him a valiant defender; then discovered, first in one feature, afterward in another, a resemblance to himself; and lastly, he was persuaded in his own mind, that he had been prejudiced and precipitate when he was younger. The spirit of hospitality was aroused by paternal love: he gave orders for a fowl to be killed instantaneously, even the hen on her nest rather than none, although the omelet might be thinner for it on the morrow. Such was the charm the gallant and gay Antonio breathed about the house. He was peculiarly pleased and gratified by the suavity of his father, not that he ever had doubted of his affection, but he had fancied that his own boisterous manners had rendered him less an object of solicitude. He had always been glad to see it bestowed on his brother, whose delicate health and sensitive nature so much required it.

No house in Spain, where few were happy then, contained four happier inmates. Ignacio, it is true, became thinner daily, and

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ceased after a time to join in the morning walks of his brother and Iñes; but he was always of the party when, returning from the siesta, they took up their guitars, and tuned each other's.

Were there ever two comely and sensitive young persons, possessing sweet voices, exercising them daily together, bending over the same book, expressing the same sentiment in its most passionate accents, were they ever long exempt from the gentle intrusion of one sweet stranger? Neither Iñes nor Antonio was aware of it: both would have smiled in the beginning, and both would have afterward been indignant at any such surmise. But revolutions in states effect no revolutions in nature. The French, who changed everything else, left the human heart as they found it. Ignacio feared, but said nothing. Antonio too, although much later, was awakened to the truth, and determined on departure. And now Ignacio was ashamed and grieved at his suspicions, and would have delayed his brother, who dissembled his observation of them; but the poor youth's health, always slender, had given way under them. For several days he had taken to his bed; fever had seized him, and had been subdued. But there is a rose which Death lays quietly on the cheek of the devoted, before the poppy sheds on it its tranquillising leaves: it had settled immovably in the midst of Ignacio's smiles, smiles tranquilly despondent. Seldom did Antonio leave his bedside, but never had he yet possessed the courage to inquire the cause of those sighs and tears, which burst forth in every moment of silence, and then only. At length however he resolved on it, that he might assure him the more confidently of his recovery, having first requested Iñes that, whenever he was absent, she would supply his place.

"Can not we go together?" said she, disquieted.

"No, señora!" answered he, with stern sadness, "we can not. You owe this duty to the companion of your girlhood, to the bequeathed of your parents, to your betrothed!"

At that word sudden paleness overspread her countenance; her lips, which never before had lost their rich colour, faded and quivered; no reply could pass them, had any been ready: even the sigh was drawn suddenly back: not one escaped. In all that was visible she was motionless. But now with strong impulse she pressed both palms against her bosom, and turned away. The suddenness and the sound struck terror into the heart of Antonio. He laid his hand on her shoulder, and looked into her face. Tears glittered on the folds

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of the long black veil; and they were not the tears of Iñes. But now she also shed them. Alas! from how many and from what distant sources do they flow!

Iñes went; she sobbed at the door, but she went. No song that evening, no book, no romance of love, no narrative of war: the French were as forgotten as the Moors.

Morning rose fresh and radiant: but the dim lavender on each side of the narrow pathway had all its dew upon it; the cistus was opening its daily flowers, with no finger to press down and attempt to smoothen the crumpled leaves; none to apply its viscous cup in playful malice against the trim ornament of a smiling lip. Nobody thought of looking for the large green lizard on the limestone by the twisted rosemary-bush, covered with as many bees as blossoms, and uprearing as many roots as branches above the prostrate wall. Nobody thought of asking, "Did you ever know any creature who panted so quickly as that foolish lizard? . . I mean in battle." Nobody met the inquiry with, "Did you ever hear of any one who felt anything a little, a very little like it, at the cembalo?"

Antonio, at this early hour, was seated on the edge of his brother's bed, asking him, with kind dissimulation, what reason he could possibly have to doubt Iñes' love and constancy.

"At first," replied Ignacio, "she used to hold my hand, to look anxiously in my face, and to wipe away her tears that she might see it the more distinctly in this darkened chamber. Now she has forgotten to take my hand; she looks as often into my face, but not anxiously; not even inquiringly; she lets her tears rise and dry again; she never wipes them away, and seldom hides them. This at least is a change in her; perhaps no favourable one for me." Antonio thus answered him: "Ignacio, if we would rest at all, we must change our posture in grief as in bed. The first moments are not like the second, nor the second like the last. Be confident in her; be confident in me: within two hours you shall, I promise you, whether you will or not. Farewell, my beloved brother! You are weary; close but your eyes for sleep, and sleep shall come. I will not awaken you, even with glad tidings."

Folding his arms, he left the chamber with a firm step. Within two hours he entered it again; but how? Hateful as monastic life had ever appeared to him, ridiculous as he daily in Salamanca had called its institutions, indifferent and incredulous as he lately had

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become to many articles of the faith, having been educated under the tuition of a soldier, so free in his opinions as once to have excited the notice and questionings of the Inquisition, he went resolutely forth at daybreak, and prevailed on the superior of a monastic order to admit him into it at once, as its sworn defender. He returned in the vestments of that order, and entered the bedchamber in silence. His brother had slept, and was yet sleeping. He gently undrew the curtain, and stood motionless. Ignacio at last moved his elbow, and sighed faintly; he then rested on it a little, and raised his cheek higher on the pillow; it had lost the gift of rest; its virtues were departed from it; there was no cool part left. He opened his eyes and looked toward Antonio; then closed them, then looked again.

"Ignacio!" said Antonio softly, "you see me; it is me you see, Ignacio!" The sick exhausted youth sighed again, and closing his hands, raised them up as if in prayer. This movement fully awakened him. He now opened his eyes in wonder on his brother, who pressed those raised hands within his, and kissed that brow which the fever had shortly left. Ignacio sighed deeply, and sank back again. The first words he uttered afterward were these:

"Oh Antonio! why could you not have waited? impetuous, impatient Antonio! I might have seen you both from Paradise; I might have blest you from thence; from thence I might indeed. O God! O Virgin! O Mary, pure and true! pardon my ingratitude! Should love ever bear that bitter fruit? Forbid it, O host of Heaven! forbid it! it must not be."

"Brother! speak not so: it is accomplished," said Antonio; "and now can you doubt your bride?"

Iñes at this moment rushed into the chamber: she knew the stately figure, she knew the lofty head, although tonsured; she screamed and fainted. Antonio drew her forth by the arm, and, when she recovered her senses, thus addressed her:

"Cousin! my heart reproaches me for having loved you. If yours (how incomparably less guilty!) should haply feel some compunction, not indeed at what is past, but at what you see," and he extended his large mantle to his arm's length, "return from the unworthy to the worthy; from him who renounces the world to him whose world you are. Now, Iñes, now we can with unabashed front go together into his chamber."

"I will tend him," said she, "day and night: I will follow him to

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the grave; I will enter it with him: yes, and even that chamber, while he suffers in it, I will enter." She paused awhile, then continued: "Antonio! oh Antonio! you have never loved. They tell us, none can love twice. That is false; but this is true: we can never love twice the same object."

Antonio stood mute with wonder at the speech of this innocent girl, retired alike from society and unbeguiled by books. Little had he considered how strong a light is sometimes thrown on the intellect, what volumes of thought are expanded and made clearly legible, by the first outflaming of the passions. And yet Antonio should have known it; for in the veins of Antonio one half was blood, the other half was fire. While, with eyes fixed on the ground, he stood yet before her, who perhaps was waiting for his reply, she added briefly:

"Let me repair my fault as well as may be. You shall see me no more. Leave me, sir."

Antonio did leave her. In a fortnight the gentle spirit of Ignacio had departed.

The French armies had again defeated the Spanish, penetrated to Santander, laid waste all the country around, and demolished the convent in which Iñes had taken refuge. Some women in Spanish cities were heroines; in Spanish convents if any became so, the heroism was French. They who have visited Santander, will remember the pointed hill on the north-west of the city, looking far over the harbour, the coast, and the region of La Mancha. Even while the enemy was in possession of the place, a solitary horseman was often seen posted on this eminence, and many were the dead bodies of French soldiers found along the roads on every side under it. Doubtless, the horseman had strong and urgent reasons for occupying a position so exposed to danger. It was Antonio. He had heard that Iñes, after the desecration of the convent, had been carried back by the invaders into Santander. Early in October, the officers of the garrison made parties with the ladies of the city to enjoy the vintage in its vicinity. One morning a peasant boy employed by Antonio, ran breathless up to him on the mountain-side, saying, as soon as he could say it:

"Illustrious señor! the señora Iñes, and the other señoras, and an officer and a soldier, all French, are coming; and only a mile behind are many more."

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"I have watched them," replied Antonio, "and shall distinguish them presently." He led his horse close behind a high waggon, laden with long and narrow barrels of newly gathered grapes, standing upright in it, and then tied his bridle to the bar which kept them in their position. Only one horse could pass it at a time. Iñes was behind; the officer was showing her the way, and threatening both vintagers and mules for their intractability. Antonio sprang forward, seized him by the collar, and threw him under them, crying to Iñes:

"Fly into the mountains with me: not a moment is to be lost. Pass me: he is out of the way. Fly! fly! Distrust my sanctity, but trust my honour, O Iñes of Ignacio!"

Iñes drew in her bridle, turned her face aside, and said irresolutely,

"I can not . . Oh! I can not. I am . . I am . . ."

She could not utter what she was: perhaps the sequel may in part reveal it. Scarcely had she spoken the last words, before she leapt down from her saddle, and hung with her whole weight on Antonio's arm, in which the drawn sword was uplifted over the enemy, and waiting only until he could rise upon his feet again, and stand upon his defence. He was young, as was discernible even through the dense forest of continuous hair, which covered all but nose and forehead. Roughly and with execrations did he thrust Iñes away from him, indignant at her struggles for his protection. Before the encounter (for which both were eager) could begin, the private had taken his post behind an ilex at the back of Antonio, and discharged his musket. Gratitude, shame, love perhaps too, hurried Iñes to his help. She fell on her knees to raise him. Gently, with open palm and quivering fingers, he pushed her arm away from him, and turning with a painful effort quite round, pressed his brow against the wayside sward. The shepherd-dogs, in the evening of that sultry day, tried vainly to quench their thirst, as they often had done in other human blood, in the blood also of Antonio: it was hard, and they left it. The shepherds gave them all the bread they carried with them, and walked home silently.

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VII. THE DEATH OF HOFER.

I PASSED two entire months in Germany, and like the people. On my way I saw Waterloo, an ugly table for an ugly game. At Innspruck I entered the church in which Andreas Hofer is buried. He lies under a plain slab, on the left, near the door. I admired the magnificent tomb of bronze, in the centre, surrounded by heroes, real and imaginary. They did not fight, tens against thousands; they did not fight for wives and children, but for lands and plunder: therefore they are heroes! My admiration for these works of art was soon satisfied, which perhaps it would not have been in any other place. Snow, mixed with rain, was falling, and was blown by the wind upon the tomb of Hofer. I thought how often he had taken advantage of such weather for his attacks against the enemies of his country, and I seemed to hear his whistle in the wind. At the little village of Landro (I feel a whimsical satisfaction in the likeness of the name to mine) the innkeeper was the friend of this truly great man . . the greatest man that Europe has produced in our days, excepting his true compeer, Kosciusko. Andreas Hofer gave him the chain and crucifix he wore three days before his death. You may imagine this man's enthusiasm, who, because I had said that Hofer was greater than king or emperor, and had made him a present of small value, as the companion and friend of that harmless and irreproachable hero, took this precious relic from his neck and offered it to me. By the order of Buonaparte, the companions of Hofer, eighty in number, were chained, thumbscrewed, and taken out of prison in couples, to see him shot. He had about him one thousand florins, in paper currency, which he delivered to his confessor, requesting him to divide it impartially among his unfortunate countrymen. The confessor, an Italian who

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spoke German, kept it, and never gave relief from it to any of them, most of whom were suffering, not only from privation of wholesome air, to which, among other privations, they never had been accustomed, but also from scantiness of nourishment and clothing. Even in Mantua, where, as in the rest of Italy, sympathy is both weak and silent, the lowest of the people were indignant at the sight of so brave a defender of his country, led into the public square to expiate a crime unheard of for many centuries in their nation. When they saw him walk forth, with unaltered countenance and firm step before them; when, stopping on the ground which was about to receive his blood, they heard him with unfaltering voice commend his soul and his country to the Creator; and, as if still under his own roof (a custom with him after the evening prayer), implore a blessing for his boys and his little daughter, and for the mother who had reared them up carefully and tenderly thus far through the perils of childhood; finally, when in a lower tone, but earnestly and emphatically, he besought pardon from the Fount of Mercy for her brother, his betrayer, many smote their breasts aloud; many, thinking that sorrow was shameful, lowered their heads and wept; many, knowing that it was dangerous, yet wept too. The people remained upon the spot an unusual time; and the French, fearing some commotion, pretended to have received an order from Buonaparte for the mitigation of the sentence, and publicly announced it. Among his many falsehoods, anyone of which would have excluded him for ever from the society of men of honour, this is perhaps the basest; as indeed of all his atrocities the death of Hofer, which he had ordered long before and appointed the time and circumstances, is that which the brave and virtuous will reprobate the most severely. He was urged by no necessity, he was prompted by no policy; his impatience of courage in an enemy, his hatred of patriotism and integrity in all, of which he had no idea himself, and saw no image in those about him, outstripped his blind passion for fame, and left him nothing but power and celebrity.

The name of Andreas Hofer will be honoured by posterity far above any of the present age, and together with the most glorious of the last, Washington and Kosciusko. For it rests on the same foundation, and indeed on a higher basis. In virtue and wisdom their coequal, he vanquished on several occasions a force greatly superior to his own in numbers and in discipline, by the courage and confidence

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he inspired, and by his brotherly care and anxiety for those who were fighting at his side. Differently, far differently, ought we to estimate the squanderers of human blood and the scorners of human tears. *We* also may boast of *our* great men in a cause as great: for without it they could not be so. We may look back upon our Blake; whom the prodigies of a Nelson do not eclipse, nor would he have wished (such was his generosity) to obscure it. Blake was among the founders of freedom; Nelson was the vanquisher of its destroyers; Washington was both; Kosciusko was neither; neither was Hofer. But the aim of all three was alike; and in the armoury of God are suspended the arms the two last of them bore; suspended for success more signal and for vengeance more complete.

I am writing this from Venice, which is among cities what Shakespeare is among men. He will give her immortality by his works, which neither her patron saint could do nor her surrounding sea.

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VIII. A VISION.

Blessed be they who erected temples to the ancient Gods! Mistaken they may have been, but they were pious and they were grateful. The deities of Olympus, although no longer venerated, have thrown open, both to the enthusiastic and to the contemplative, many a lofty view beyond the sterile eminences of human life, and have adorned every road of every region with images of grandeur and of grace. Never are they malignant or indifferent to the votary who has abandoned them; and I believe, there is no record of any appearing by night with frowns and threats: but, on the contrary, I know from my own experience, that neither time nor neglect has worn the celestial smile off their placid countenances. An instance of this fact I am now about to relate. Let me begin by observing that my eyes, perhaps by an imprudent use of them, grow soon weary with reading, even while curiosity and interest have lost little or nothing of excitement. A slumber of a few minutes is sufficient to refresh them; during which time I often enjoy the benefit of a dream; and, what is (I believe) remarkable and singular, it usually takes a direction far wide of the studies on which I had been engaged. On one occasion, perhaps it might have been that (pushing my book away from me to the middle of the table) the last object I saw was a picture by Swaneveldt, on the left of which there is a temple; for a temple, sure enough, stood before me in my dream: beside it ran a river, and beyond it rose a mountain, each sensible alike of the sky that glowed above. So far the picture and the dream were in accordance. But the dream's temple was entirely its own: it had no sheep nor shepherd near it, as the picture had: and, although dreams are apt to take greater liberties than pictures do, yet in the picture there was an

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autumnal tree by the side of a summer tree; the one of rich yellow, the other of deep green. In the dream I remember nothing of the kind; yet I verily think I remember every particle of it. I remember a cool and gentle hand conducting me over some narrow planks, thrown across a deep channel of still water. I remember the broad leaves underneath us, and how smooth, how quiet, how stainless. I remember we tarried here awhile, not leaning on the rail, for there was none, but tacitly agreeing to be mistaken in what we reciprocally were leaning on. At length we passed onward, by the side of a cottage in ruins, with an oven projecting from it at the gable-end: on the outside of its many-coloured arch were gilliflowers growing in the crevices: very green moss, in rounded tufts, and blossoming, had taken possession of its entrance: and another plant, as different as possible, was hanging down from it, so long and slender and flexible, that a few bees, as they alighted on it, shook it. Suddenly I stumbled: my beautiful guide blushed deeply, and said,

"Do you stumble at the first step of the temple? What an omen!"

I had not perceived that we had reached any temple: but now, abashed at the reproof, I looked up, and could read the inscription, although the letters were ancient, for they were deeply and well engraven.

Sacred to Friendship were the words, in Greek. The steps were little worn, and retained all their smoothness and their polish. After so long a walk as I had taken, I doubt whether I should have ascended them without the hand that was offered me. In the temple I beheld an image, of a marble so purely white, that it seemed but recently chiselled. I walked up to it and stood before it. The feet were not worn as the feet of some images are, by the lips of votaries: indeed I could fancy that scarcely the tip of a finger had touched them; and I felt pretty sure that words were the only offerings, and now and then a sigh at a distance. Yet the longer I gazed at it the more beautiful did it appear in its colour and proportions; and turning to my companion, who (I then discovered) was looking at me,

"This image," said I, "has all the features and all the attributes of Love, excepting the bow, quiver, and arrows."

"Yes," answered she, smiling; "all, excepting the mischievous. It has all that the wiser and the better of the ancients attributed to him. But do you really see no difference?"

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"Again I raised my eyes, and after a while I remarked that the figure was a female, very modest, very young, and little needing the zone that encompassed her. I suppressed this portion of my observations, innocent as it was, and only replied,

"I see that the torch is borne above the head, and that the eyes are uplifted in the same direction."

"Do you remember," said she, "any image of Love in this attitude?"

"It might be," I answered; "and with perfect propriety."

"Yes; it both might and should be," said she. "But," she continued, "we are not here to worship Love, or to say anything about him. Like all the other blind, he is so quick at hearing; and above all others, blind or sighted, he is so ready to take advantage of the slightest word, that I am afraid he may one day or other come down on us unaware. He has been known before now to assume the form of Friendship, making sad confusion. Let us deprecate this, bending our heads devoutly to the Deity before us."

Was it a blush, or was it the sun of such a bright and genial day, that warmed my cheek so vividly while it descended in adoration: or could it be, by any chance of casualty, that the veil touched it through which the breath of my virgin guide had been passing? Whatever it was, it awakened me. Again my eyes fell on the open book; to rest on it, not to read it; and I neither dreamed nor slumbered a second time that day.

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IX. THE DREAM OF PETRARCA.

When I was younger, I was fond of wandering in solitary places, and never was afraid of slumbering in woods and grottoes. Among the chief pleasures of my life, and among the commonest of my occupations, was the bringing before me such heroes and heroines of antiquity, such poets and sages, such of the prosperous and of the unfortunate, as most interested me by their courage, their wisdom, their eloquence, or their adventures. Engaging them in the conversation best suited to their characters, I knew perfectly their manners, their steps, their voices; and often did I moisten with my tears the models I had been forming of the less happy. Great is the privilege of entering into the studies of the intellectual; great is that of conversing with the guides of nations, the movers of the mass, the regulators of the unruly will, stiff in its impurity, and rash against the finger of the Almighty Power that formed it; but give me rather the creature to sympathise with; apportion me the sufferings to assuage. Allegory had few attractions for me; believing it to be the delight, in general, of idle, frivolous, inexcursive minds, in whose mansions there is neither hall nor portal to receive the loftier of the Passions. A stranger to the affections, she holds a low station among the handmaidens of Poetry, being fit for little but an apparition in a mask. I had reflected for some time on this subject, when, wearied with the length of my walk over the mountains, and finding a soft old mole-hill covered with grey grass by the way-side, I laid my head upon it, and slept. I cannot tell how long it was before a species of dream, or vision, came over me.

Two beautiful youths appeared beside me; each was winged; but the wings were hanging down, and seemed ill adapted to flight.

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One of them, whose voice was the softest I ever heard, looking at me frequently, said to the other, "He is under my guardianship for the present: do not awaken him with that feather." Methought, on hearing the whisper, I saw something like the feather of an arrow, and then the arrow itself, the whole of it, even to the point; although he carried it in such a manner that it was difficult at first to discover more than a palm's length of it; the rest of the shaft (and the whole of the barb) was behind his ancles.

"This feather never awakens anyone," replied he, rather petulantly; "but it brings more of confident security, and more of cherished dreams, than you, without me, are capable of imparting."

"Be it so!" answered the gentler; "none is less inclined to quarrel or dispute than I am. Many whom you have wounded grievously, call upon me for succour; but so little am I disposed to thwart you, it is seldom I venture to do more for them than to whisper a few words of comfort in passing. How many reproaches, on these occasions, have been cast upon me for indifference and infidelity! Nearly as many, and nearly in the same terms, as upon you."

"Odd enough, that we, O Sleep! should be thought so alike!" said Love, contemptuously. "Yonder is he who bears a nearer resemblance to you: the dullest have observed it."

I fancied I turned my eyes to where he was pointing, and saw at a distance the figure he designated. Meanwhile the contention went on uninterruptedly. Sleep was slow in asserting his power or his benefits. Love recapitulated them; but only that he might assert his own above them. Suddenly he called on me to decide, and to choose my patron. Under the influence, first of the one, then of the other, I sprang from repose to rapture, I alighted from rapture on repose, and knew not which was sweetest. Love was very angry with me, and declared he would cross me throughout the whole of my existence. Whatever I might on other occasions have thought of his veracity, I now felt too surely the conviction that he would keep his word. At last, before the close of the altercation, the third Genius had advanced, and stood near us. I can not tell how I knew him, but I knew him to be the Genius of Death. Breathless as I was at beholding him, I soon became familiar with his features. First they seemed only calm; presently they grew contemplative; and lastly beautiful: those of the Graces themselves are less regular, less harmonious, less composed. Love glanced at him unsteadily, with

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a countenance in which there was somewhat of anxiety, somewhat of disdain; and cried, "Go away! go away! Nothing that thou touchest, lives."

"Say, rather, child!" replied the advancing form, and advancing grew loftier and statelier, "say rather that nothing of beautiful or of glorious lives its own true life until my wing hath passed over it."

Love pouted; and rumpled and bent down with his forefinger the stiff short feathers on his arrow-head: but replied not. Although he frowned worse than ever, and at me, I dreaded him less and less, and scarcely looked toward him. The milder and calmer Genius, the third, in proportion as I took courage to contemplate him, regarded me with more and more complacency. He held neither flower nor arrow, as the others did; but throwing back the clusters of dark curls that overshadowed his countenance, he presented to me his hand, openly and benignly. I shrank on looking at him so near; and yet I sighed to love him. He smiled, not without an expression of pity, at perceiving my diffidence, my timidity: for I remembered how soft was the hand of Sleep, how warm and entrancing was Love's. By degrees I grew ashamed of my ingratitude; and turning my face away, I held out my arms, and felt my neck within his. Composure allayed all the throbbings of my bosom, the coolness of freshest morning breathed around, the heavens seemed to open above me; while the beautiful cheek of my deliverer rested on my head. I would now have looked for those others; but, knowing my intention by my gesture, he said consolatorily,

"Sleep is on his way to the earth, where many are calling him; but it is not to them he hastens; for every call only makes him fly further off. Sedately and gravely as he looks, he is nearly as capricious and volatile as the more arrogant and ferocious one."

"And Love," said I, "whither is he departed? If not too late, I would propitiate and appease him."

"He who can not follow me, he who can not overtake and pass me," said the Genius, "is unworthy of the name, the most glorious in earth or heaven. Look up! Love is yonder; and ready to receive thee."

I looked: the earth was under me: I saw only the clear blue sky, and something brighter above it.

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X. PARABLE OF ASABEL.

CHAPTER I.

ASABEL in his youth had been of those who place their trust in God, and he prospered in the land, and many of his friends did partake of his prosperity.

After a length of years it came to pass that he took less and less delight in the manifold gifts of God; for that his heart grew fat within him, and knew not any work-day for its work; nor did thankfulness enter into it, as formerly, to awake the sluggard.

Nevertheless did Asabel praise and glorify the Almighty, both morning and evening, and did pray unto him for the continuance and increase of his loving mercies; and did call himself, as the godly are wont to do, miserable sinner, and leper, and worm, and dust.

And all men did laud Asabel, inasmuch as, being clothed in purple and smelling of spikenard, he was a leper, and worm, and dust.

And many did come from far regions to see that dust, and that worm, and that leper; and did marvel at him; and did bow their heads; and did beseech of God that they might be like unto him.

But God inclined not his ear; and they returned unto their own country.

CHAPTER II.

And behold it came to pass that an angel from above saw Asabel go forth from his house.

And the angel did enter, and did seat himself on the seat of Asabel.

After a while, a shower fell in sunny drops upon the plane-tree at

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the gate, and upon the hyssop thereby, and over the field nigh unto the dwelling.

Whereon did Asabel hasten him back; and, coming into the doorway, he saw another seated upon his seat, who arose not before him, but said only, "Peace unto thee!"

Asabel was wroth, and said, "Lo! the rain abateth, the sun shineth through it; if thou wilt eat bread, eat; if thou wilt drink water, drink; but, having assuaged thy hunger and thy thirst, depart!"

Then said the angel unto Asabel, "I will neither eat bread nor drink water under thy roof, O Asabel, forasmuch as thou didst send therefrom the master whom I serve."

And now the wrath of Asabel waxed hotter, and he said, "Neither thy master nor the slave of thy master have I sent away, not knowing nor having seen either."

Then rose the angel from the seat, and spake: "Asabel! Asabel! thy God hath filled thy house with plenteousness. Hath he not verily done this and more unto thee?"

And Asabel answered him, and said: "Verily the Lord my God hath done this and more unto his servant: blessed be his name for ever!"

Again spake the angel:

"He hath given thee a name among thy people; and many by his guidance have come unto thee for counsel and for aid."

"Counsel have I given: aid also have I given," said Asabel, "and neither he who received it nor he who gave it, hath repented himself thereof."

Then answered the angel:

"The word that thou spakest is indeed the true word. But answer me in the name of the Lord thy God. Hath not thy soul been farther from him as thy years and his benefits increased? The more wealth and the more wisdom (in thy estimation of it) he bestowed upon thee, hast thou not been the more proud, the more selfish, the more disinclined to listen unto the sorrows and wrongs of men?"

And Asabel gazed upon him, and was angered that a youth should have questioned him, and thought it a shame that the eyes of the young should see into the secrets of the aged; and stood reproved before him.

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But the angel took him by the hand and spake thus: "Asabel! behold the fruit of all the good seed thy God hath given thee; pride springing from wealth, obduracy from years, and from knowledge itself uncontrollable impatience and inflexible perversity. Couldst thou not have employed these things much better? Again I say it, thou hast driven out the God that dwelt with thee; that dwelt within thy house, within thy breast; that gave thee much for thyself, and entrusted thee with more for others. Having seen thee abuse, revile, and send him thus away from thee, what wonder that I, who am but the lowest of his ministers, and who have bestowed no gifts upon thee, should be commanded to depart!" Asabel covered his eyes, and when he raised them up again, the angel no longer was before him.

"Of a truth," said he, and smote his breast, "it was the angel of the Lord." And then did he shed tears. But they fell into his bosom, after a while, like refreshing dew, bitter as were the first of them; and his heart grew young again, and felt the head that rested on it; and the weary in spirit knew, as they had known before, the voice of Asabel. Thus wrought the angel's gentleness upon him, even as the quiet and silent water wins itself an entrance where tempest and fire pass over. It is written that other angels did look up with loving and admiration into the visage of this angel on his return; and he told the younger and more zealous of them, that whenever they would descend into the gloomy vortex of the human heart, under the softness and serenity of their voice and countenance its turbulence would subside.

"Beloved!" said the angel, "there are portals that open to the palm-branches we carry, and that close at the flaming sword."

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XI. JERIBOHANIAH.

JERIBOHANIAH sate in his tent, and was grieved and silent, for years had stricken him.

And behold there came and stood before him a man who also was an aged man, who, howbeit, was not grieved, neither was he silent.

Nevertheless, until Jeribohaniah spake unto him, spake not he.

But Jeribohaniah had alway been one of ready speech; nor verily had age minished his words, nor the desire of his heart to question the stranger.

Wherefore uttered he first what stirred within him, saying,

"Methinks thou comest from a far country: now what country may that be whence thou comest?"

And the stranger named by name the country whence his feet, together with the staff of his right-hand, had borne him.

"Bad, exceeding bad, and stinking in our nostrils," said Jeribohaniah, "is that country; nevertheless mayst thou enter and eat within my tent, and welcome; seeing that thy scrip hangeth down to thy girdle, round and large as hangeth the gourd in the days of autumn; and it is fitting and right that, if I give unto thee of mine, so likewise thou of thine, in due proportion, give unto me; and the rather, forasmuch as my tent containeth few things within it, and thy wallet (I guess) abundant."

Whereupon did Jeribohaniah step forward, and strive to touch with his right hand the top of the wallet, and the bottom with his left. But the stranger drew back therefrom, saying, "Nay." Then Jeribohaniah waxed wroth, and would have smitten the stranger at the tent, asking him in his indignation why he drew back, and wherefore

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he withheld the wallet from the most just, the most potent, the most intelligent, and the most venerable of mankind! Whereupon the stranger answered him, and said, "Far from thy servant be all strife and wrangling, all doubt and suspicion. Verily he hath much praised thee, even until this day, unto those among whom he was born and abided. And when some spake evil of thee and of thine, then did thy servant, even I who stand before thee, say unto them, 'Tarry! I will myself go forth unto Jeribohaniah, and see unto his ways, and report unto ye truly what they be.'"

"And now I guess," quoth Jeribohaniah, "thou wouldst return and tell them the old story; how I and my children have lusted after the goods of other men, and have taken them. Now we only took the goods: the men took we not; yet so rebellious and ungrateful were they, that we were fain to put them to the edge of the sword. And thus did we. And lest another such generation of vipers should spring up in the wilderness beyond them, we sent onward just men, who should turn and harrow the soil, and put likewise to the edge of the sword such as would hinder us in doing what is lawful and right, namely, that which our wills ordained. To prevent such an extremity, our prudence and humanity led us, under God, to detain the silver and gold intrusted to us by the most suspicious and spiteful of our enemies. And now thou art admitted into my confidence, lay down thy scrip, and eat and drink freely."

"Pleaseth it thee," replied the stranger, "that I carry back unto my own country what thou hast related unto me as seeming good in thine eyes?"

"Carry back what thou wilt," calmly said Jeribohaniah, "save only that which my sons, whose long shadows are now just behind thee, may hold back."

Scarcely had he spoken when the sons entered the tent, and, occupying all the seats, bade the stranger be seated and welcome. Venison brought they forth in deep dishes; wine also poured they out; and they drank unto his health. And when they had wiped their lips with the back of the hand, which the Lord in his wisdom had made hairy for that purpose, they told the stranger that other strangers had blamed curiosity in their kindred; and, that they might not be reproved for it, they would ask no questions as to what might peradventure be contained within the scrip, but would look into it at their leisure.

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Jeribohaniah told his guest that they were wild lads, and would have their way. He then looked more gravely and seriously, saying,

"Everything in this mortal life ends better than we, short-sighted creatures, could have believed or hoped. Providence hath sent us back those boys, purely that thy mission might be accomplished. Unless they had come home in due time, how little wouldst thou have had to relate to thy own tribe concerning us, save only what others, envying our probity and prosperity, and far behind us in wisdom and enterprise, have discoursed about, year after year."

END OF VOL. V.

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